

THE TIMES
Monday

Senior... Michael Binyon, in Bonn, presents a portrait of Willy Brandt, West Germany's elder statesman, who is 70 today.

Citizens Russell Davies provides the lowdown on life in Cambridge.

Ghosts... Robert Fisk reports on the grim facts of life in Beirut, where death is a constant companion.

Of Christmas... The Monday Page comes face to face with the festive season.



Yet to come
Macao: what does the future hold for the Portuguese colony as neighbouring Hongkong prepares for 1997?

Judge 'has sympathy' in sex case

Judge Brian Gibbons, QC, said at the Central Criminal Court that he had considerable sympathy for a man who had sexual intercourse with a girl aged seven. "It strikes me as being one of the kind of accidents that could almost happen to anyone," he said.

Korchnoi mugged

Viktor Korchnoi, he exiled Russian chess grandmaster, was mugged on Tower Bridge on Thursday night, it was revealed last night. Mr Korchnoi, aged 52, is in London for the world chess championship semi-final.

Rothschild deal

Rothschild Group, the holding company of NM Rothschild, the merchant bankers, has agreed to buy the maximum permitted stake in Smith Brothers, the London stockbrokers.

Peugeot crisis

The French Prime Minister is stepping in to defuse the crisis in the French car industry after the decision of the Peugeot factory to shut down its strike-hit Poissy plant.

Budget test

The Council of Ministers is to test the legality of the controversial EEC budget. The Council believed at least four points in it could be challenged before the European Court.

Drink warning

Magistrates in Essex have threatened to impose prison sentences on motorists convicted of drink-driving offences. Essex takes lead page 4.

Money savers

With only six shopping days left to Christmas, Family Money has been investigating ways of saving by shopping in France.

India revolution

India is planning to revolutionize the appearance of its locally built cars which at present look as though they belong to the 1950s.

Neill dismissed

Arsenal have dismissed Terry Neill, their manager for seven years, after a run of poor results. Including a home defeat in the Milk Cup by Walsall.

Leader page 9

Letters: On the Commonwealth, from Professor Mike Faber; public relations and Government, from Mr J. Andrew, and Mr D. Smith; rail archives, from Dr P. W. Lewis. Leading articles: Local secret document, Charities Features, page 8. Julian Haviland on Mrs Thatcher's backroom battles: Why preserve Thirties architecture, asks Sir John Summerson; Bernard Levin tories of suffering in the name of modern art: Roy Strong on table manners. Obituary, page 10. Mr David Markham, Professor Lionel Mirsky.

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Two shot dead as store chief is rescued from IRA

From Richard Ford, Ballinamore, co Leitrim

A soldier and a policeman, members of the Irish Republic's security forces, were shot dead yesterday in fierce gun battles as Mr Don Tidy, the kidnapped chainstore executive, was successfully freed.

The policeman was later named as Mr Peter Sheehan, aged 23, a recruit from the police training depot at Templemore, co Tipperary.

Mr Tidy, aged 49, was unharmed after his 22-day ordeal at the hands of the Provisional IRA who had demanded £5m from the Associated British Foods company for his safe release.

Last night, looking tired and with a grey beard, he made emotional telephone calls to his family at their home in Rathfriland, co Dublin, and to his business colleagues.

A detective, Mr Donal Kelleher, was shot in the leg when he threw himself in front of Mr Tidy as his captors turned their guns on him. A second soldier was injured, along with two members of the kidnap gang during three separate gun battles in isolated woodland near the village of Ballinamore, co Leitrim.

Four members of the gang escaped a dragnet of 1,000 police and army forces in the biggest security operation in the history of the Irish state. But detectives believe that they are still hiding in woods two miles north of the village near the road leading to the border with co Fermanagh.

A thousand extra troops, assisted by army helicopters, were drafted into the area and will begin a major search at daylight this morning.

Last night, a massive security operation was taking place on both sides of the border, with police and army checkpoints stopping all vehicles and searching them every few miles, as reports continued to come in that sporadic gunfire had been heard in the woods.

In Dublin, the Dail and the city's Roman Catholic and Protestant archbishops welcomed Mr Tidy's safe release, but expressed sympathy to the families of the two young men who died.

Inspector Patrick Malachy said: "Mr Tidy is in good health. He is jumping for joy at his release, he is very excited

and overjoyed at being free again."

Mr Garry Weston, chairman of Associated British Foods, said: "We are supremely delighted on behalf of his family and all of his colleagues."

Chief Supt James McNally said: "It was an excellent day's work, saddened by the deaths of two very brave young men. Mr Tidy was unharmed and I have just been speaking to his daughter, who is delighted at her father's release."

Mr Tidy's release comes after one of the most intensive security operations ever mounted in the Republic, and occurred only 24 hours after it was revealed the kidnappers had renewed their ransom demand for £5m.

This had been rejected by Associated British Foods, who had taken into account the policy of the British and Irish governments that no cash be paid for kidnappers.

Mr Tidy was abducted as he drove his daughter to school only a few months after the Provisional IRA had been foiled in an attempt to kidnap Mr Weston, from his home in co Wicklow.



Freedom day: Carol Compton being escorted from court while the judges deliberate.

Brittan hits out at closed shop

By Our Political Correspondent

Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, warned the unions last night that the closed shop could be in jeopardy if they failed to learn the important lessons of the National Graphical Association (NGA) dispute at Warrington.

In a speech on the subject of "Ending the Closed Shop", Mr Brittan told a meeting of businessmen in Northallerton, North Yorkshire: "The closed shop is itself, however enforced, a flagrant and fundamental denial of individual liberties."

"Our employment legislation has rightly been aimed at curbing the worst abuses which the closed shop brings with it. But while trade unionists go on believing that it can be right for them to insist on their fellow workers joining a union whether they want to or not, this issue will continue to poison industrial relations."

"Moreover, no one should have any doubt that, however temporarily comfortable it may be, even for some employers, the suppression of individual workers' rights which closed shop agreements involve is not only morally wrong but deeply damaging to the economy and jobs."

He also said that the closed shop, as with every rigid monopoly attempting to secure immunity from market forces, contained the seeds of its own destruction: the respite was only temporary. Mr Brittan added: "Change there has to be, unless whole industries are to die."

The fact that the Home Secretary should speak in such tough and unrelenting language gives an indication of the Government's concern on an issue which did not feature in last June's manifesto.

But Whitehall sources did point out last night that Mr Tom King, the Secretary of State for Employment, had it in his power to bring forward the closed shop ballot deadline contained in the Employment Act, 1982.

Unions have until November next year to win 80 per cent support for closed shop agreements. If they fail employees have rights to non-membership. But Mr Norman Tebbit announced last year: "If there is evidence that the closed shop is still being operated intolerantly and inflexibly, I shall not hesitate to bring forward the date of implementation."

Ministers are thought to have reviewed that deadline in October, but there would be nothing to stop Mr King advancing the ballot date if the Prime Minister and the Cabinet felt that NGA intolerance and inflexibility demanded a stronger response than a threat from Mr Brittan.

Guardian missile leak

Judge orders 'mole' unmasked

By Richard Evans

A civil servant who leaked that it was entitled to protect its anonymous source from being identified by markings on the document, and declared that the official be traced and removed.

Lord Justice Griffiths said: "I regard it as urgent that every possible step should be taken to identify this untrustworthy person and remove him from the position where he has access to classified material."

"Too much time has already passed. The trial will be going cold and the culprit will be taking steps to cover his tracks. There must be no more delays and the document must be handed over immediately."

The court ordered The Guardian to return the secret cruise missile document to the Ministry of Defence.

In a ruling which is likely to have far reaching implications for journalists, three judges

rejected the newspaper's plea that it was entitled to protect its anonymous source from being identified by markings on the document, and declared that the official be traced and removed.

Within one hour of the court order the photograph of the ministry memorandum received by The Guardian was handed over in a lawyer's office complete with identifying marks which could enable security officials to uncover the "mole".

The document, marked "secret", involved a memo from Mr Michael Heseltine, Secretary of State for Defence, to the Prime Minister, of which there were only seven copies, in which he dealt with publicity surrounding the arrival of cruise missiles at Greenham Common air base.

The newspaper published the text in full on October 31. When asked originally to return the document the news-

paper said that it could only do so after removing any markings. Mr Heseltine and the Attorney General successfully sued the newspaper in the High Court on Thursday to return the document intact, and the Court of Appeal upheld the ruling yesterday.

The newspaper had relied on an untested clause of the Contempt of Court Act, 1981, allowing newspapers to protect their sources of information.

Section 10 of the Act provides that no court can require disclosure of sources unless "it is established to the satisfaction of the court that disclosure is necessary in the interests of justice or national security, or for the prevention of disorder or crime."

Sir John Donaldson, Master of the Rolls, said that the case raised once again "the extent to which journalists are allowed to protect their sources of information."

But national security re-

quired that the "mole" be identified at the earliest possible moment and removed from his position. "This is blindingly obvious."

The court granted the newspaper leave to appeal to the House of Lords over interpretation of the act, but the document had to be handed over immediately. "There are occasions, rare perhaps, where it is for the Court of Appeal to reach a final decision," Sir John said.

Mr Peter Preston, editor of The Guardian, last night defended his decision to comply with the court ruling. "Something I have preached all my journalistic life is that the law, whether you like it or not, or whether you want it changed or not, has to be submitted to."

"This was the first case under section 10 of the Contempt Act which was supposed to give journalists protection for their

Continued on back page, col 3

Nanny free but guilty of arson

From Peter Nichols, Livorno

Carol Compton, the Scottish nanny held by the Italians for 17 months in pre-trial detention, walked out of the court of assizes here tonight, a free woman after being found not guilty of attempted murder.

The court sentenced her to two and a half years in prison for arson and attempted arson but this meant her immediate release.

As applause broke out in the court, Miss Compton, aged 21, was immediately whisked away for a last look at her cell. Indeed, when she had entered the court room earlier in the day in a dark blue pleated dress and with a beige jacket over her arm it seemed she was expecting her criminal freedom.

The head of two professional and six lay judges acquitted her on the principal charge of attempted murder on the ground of insufficient proof. On the five charges of arson she was acquitted on one and found guilty on the four others, two of them reduced to attempted arson.

The public prosecutor argued the defence by advising the judges: "Acquit Carol Compton only if in conscience you believe that today you would entrust your child to her."

cheated by a squalid government manoeuvre, and described the minister's plans as a "half-dead mouse."

Yet when the closure was moved for a vote on the substantive question of second reading, Mr Mitchell scraped together the requisite 100 MPs in majority support - although some of them then voted against the Bill itself.

The result left the Law Society almost speechless (Our Property Correspondent writes). The society offered a terse "no comment" when asked for comments.

The Consumers' Association, which played a vital part in preparing Mr Mitchell's Bill, claimed the vote represented a victory for its campaign.

A spokesman said: "This is a good day for house buyers. Now MPs can get down to the fine tuning and ensure that the new arrangements for conveyancing provide the kind of protection for the consumer that we are confident can be achieved."

Mr Mark Boles, for the Building Societies' Association, welcomed the Government's intention to give building societies the power to undertake conveyancing. "It is something we have already requested," he said.

He added, however, that the association criticized the bill for failing to include adequate safeguards for the consumer.

Discussing the Bill earlier, Mr John Spalding, chief general manager of the Halifax Building Society, said conveyancing law and practice had not adapted to meet the needs of today's home-owning society. He said societies were prepared to take up conveyancing in competition with solicitors for their customers' benefit.

Mr David Ashford, chairman of the National Association of conveyancers, representing non-solicitors who do conveyancing, said: "It is very exciting and we are cheered by its success."

Mr Ashford said the vote represented a "massive defeat for the pro-monopolists, the Law Society and their cohorts".

MPs' names, page 2
Parliamentary report, page 4

Lebanon leader in surprise Libya visit

From Robert Fisk, Beirut

President Amin Gemayel arrived unexpectedly in the Libyan capital of Tripoli last night for talks with Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi, the Libyan leader, as another of Lebanon's allegedly unbreakable ceasefires permitted the authorities to reopen Beirut airport for the first time this month.

The truce had been agreed at a long meeting in Damascus between leaders of at least three of the militia groups which have been fighting around the airport and in the mountains east of Beirut.

The Syrian orientation of the ceasefire and the Lebanese leader's almost unprecedented visit to Libya - at Colonel Ghaddafi's own request - suggests that the Lebanese Government is now anxious to see just how far Syria and its allies are prepared to go in supporting the Gemayel regime. They may well be doing so with the encouragement of the Americans, whose military confrontation with Syria has been in danger of getting out of control.

Colonel Simon Kassis, the head of Lebanese military intelligence, has been in Damascus for discussions with his Syrian opposite number and the highly charged rhetoric that used to be exchanged between Syria and Lebanon has now disappeared.

The Lebanese had "frozen" their relations with Libya on November 23 because they complained that Colonel Ghaddafi's radio and newspapers were making "verbal attacks" on Lebanon. Yesterday all this was forgotten. Indeed it was the Libyan news agency which first announced Mr Gemayel's arrival.

Libya maintains a token battalion of troops in the Syrian-occupied Bekaa valley, and the Lebanese President will undoubtedly have asked the Libyan leader how long he intends to extend their uninvited visit. Several hundred Revolutionary Guards from Iran are also quartered around Baalbek - they were brought in by Syria more than a year and a half ago - and it will be interesting to see if the Lebanese authorities extend any courtesies to Tehran.

He said that the difference had nothing to do with "the Getty factor" - the enormous purchasing power of the J Paul Getty Museum in Malibu - the thought he agreed that the museum had recently paid a very high price for a drawing.

Nevertheless, in making their valuation on behalf of the Duke, Christie's must have taken full account of the purchasing power of other potentially interested parties.

Art treasure talks collapse

By Geraldine Norman, Sale Room Correspondent

Negotiations between the Duke of Devonshire and the British Museum over the biggest art transfer to the nation of recent times have collapsed. Crisp statements from each side announced their failure to agree last night, after talks lasting more than a year.

The Duke had offered the museum a group of 74 Old Master drawings, including works by Rembrandt, Raphael, Rubens and Van Dyck. The bone of contention is their value which seems to have been set at various figures in the £3m to £6m range by different experts.

While the theoretical market value of the drawings is of much academic interest, the real argument as far as the Duke and the museum are concerned rests with the sum he would be



The Duke of Devonshire: Offered 74 drawings.

left with after tax. Numerous different formulas for calculating this figure have apparently been explored without result.

The final move seems to have been the biggest tax-free offer the museum could stretch to after taking a very deep breath.

We take this opportunity to wish our many friends the compliments of the season and best wishes for 1984

ARTHUR BELL & SONS plc
DISTILLERS PERTH SCOTLAND
Established 1825
And are an INDEPENDENT Company

Councillor resigns over clash at Brent

By Rupert Morris

described in yesterday's report
single parent.

Aircraft selling prices

Boeing 747-200: Belgium 1 fr 50; Canada 1 fr 50; France 1 fr 100; Germany 1 fr 100; Italy 1 fr 100; Japan 1 fr 100; Korea 1 fr 100; Spain 1 fr 100; Switzerland 1 fr 100; Taiwan 1 fr 100; Thailand 1 fr 100; United States 1 fr 100; West Germany 1 fr 100; Yugoslavia 1 fr 100.

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way Kr 7.50; Pakistan Rs 12; Portugal
126; Singapore S\$ 50; Spain Pes 180;
yden Sfr 8 00; Switzerland S Frs 3.00;

[illegible]

Sex with children could happen to anyone accidentally, judge says

There were gasps of astonishment from a public gallery in the Central Criminal Court yesterday as a senior judge defended a man who had had sexual intercourse with a friend's seven-year-old daughter.

"It strikes me as being one of the kind of accidents that could almost happen to anyone," Judge Gibbins said.

The judge, aged 71, who has two sons and a daughter, added: "This is, of course, a serious offence against a little child. I hope the public will not misunderstand me when I say what I do."

He said that he had considerable sympathy with William Watson-Sweeney, aged 35, a builder, said to have a serious drink problem.

"For some moments people like this lose their natural restraint," Judge Gibbins said.

Watson-Sweeney, of Vernon Road, Guildford, Surrey, admitted having unlawful sexual intercourse with the girl. His not guilty plea to raping her was accepted.

He was further remanded in custody until Monday. "I want to see if there is any other punishment available rather



Judge Gibbins: "Restraints can be lost."

girl told her mother, who informed the police.

Watson-Sweeney at first told detectives: "You've got to be joking." But within minutes he broke down and confessed: "I must have been drinking too much."

"My God, I feel terrible about this. I wasn't legless, but I wasn't sober. She said she knew what mummies and daddies did in bedrooms."

Mr Jeremy Carter-Manning, for the defence, said that his client was "full of remorse and shame." The offence was an isolated one and the memory of it would remain with Watson-Sweeney and his family "for the rest of their lives." He realizes that he deserves everything he gets.

Mrs Brenda Bridge, the wife of the Dean of Guildford, the Very Rev Antony Bridge, was in court. She had been friendly with Watson-Sweeney and his wife, who have a younger son, and described them as a lovely family.

Judge Gibbins received considerable publicity two months ago after he criticized a jury for acquitting a young burglar. Three years earlier he condemned workers at Heathrow for their dishonesty.



Picking time for turkeys at Marlow, Buckinghamshire (Photograph: Bill Warhurst).

Plea to free husband of dead solicitor

By A Staff Reporter

The husband of the murdered solicitor Mrs Janice Weston was still being questioned by the police last night after the failure of a High Court attempt to free him from custody.

The court was told that Mr Anthony Weston, a property developer, would either be charged with the murder of his wife, who was 37, or be freed by 2 pm today.

Lord Justice Watkins, sitting with Mr Justice Mann said that the application for a writ of habeas corpus had not been made out.

Mr Weston, aged 39, has been held at Huntingdon police station, Cambridgeshire, a few miles from the A1 lay-by where his wife's battered body was found in September, since shortly after noon on Thursday.

Mr Dermot Wright, counsel for Mr Weston, said that he should either be charged or released immediately. "He is now refusing to answer any more questions and will not say any more," he told the Queen's Bench Divisional Court.

"What we say is that the police are holding Mr Weston, knowing that he is at a low emotional ebb, since he has suffered for some months since the dramatic and brutal murder of his wife, holding him at a time when obviously he is very depressed and emotional so that they may, by holding him in the police station - for most of the time in a cell - gain some kind of confession or admission to the murder from him. We say that is wrong."

Mr Timothy Barnes, for the police, said he repudiated any suggestion that they were trying to force a confession out of him and rejected a suggestion that they were "scraping the barrel".

As a result of new information which had come into their possession, the police wanted to interview Mr Weston further before charging him or releasing him, Mr Barnes said.

After a 30-minute hearing Det Chief Supt Len Bradley, who is leading the murder inquiry, said that he would abide by his undertaking to charge or release Mr Weston by 2 pm today.

Mr Weston has told the police that he last saw his wife the day before she died and that he spent the weekend of her death on business in France.

Mrs Weston, who lives at Addison Avenue, Holland Park, west London, was a partner in the legal firm of Charles Russell, of Lincoln's Inn.

Kidnap gang leader jailed for 18 years

George Panay, aged 30, the gang leader who masterminded the kidnap of Mr Emmanuel Nuerb and his wife Maria, was jailed at the Central Criminal Court yesterday for 18 years.

Anastasi Panay, aged 36, his brother, was sentenced to 10 years and Donald Gray, aged 27, their accomplice, to eight years.

The couple were kidnapped and held captive for a £2m ransom for five days.

Sir James Miskin, QC, the Recorder, told George Panay: "I am quite satisfied that you were the architect of these dreadful matters. You masterminded the terror struck into Maria and Emmanuel when they were first overpowered, held at knife point, and then bound gagged and blindfolded."

"It was you who took the gamble and organized their terrifying ordeal, you who frightened the husband into speaking on the phone to his father, and you who made those terrifying demands for a £2m ransom and accompanied those demands with disgusting threats."

But Panay, a "wicked and devious man" had reckoned

Thatcher bomb 'cry for help'

A north London schoolboy aged 14 was "making a cry for help" when he posted a bomb to Mrs Margaret Thatcher on St Patrick's day, a detective said yesterday.

Det Insp Brendan Gibb, of Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch told the Central Criminal Court that he had made extensive investigations into the case but could find "absolutely no evidence whatsoever" that the boy had any political motive.

On the second day of his trial the boy changed his plea to guilty to sending an explosive device through the post. The charges alleging that he intended to injure the Prime Minister or any other person were left on the court's file. Sentence was adjourned for a month for reports and the boy was granted bail.

£80,000 crash award for boy

Stephen Elliott, aged 16, was awarded £80,000 agreed damages in the High Court in London yesterday after being injured in an accident involving his father's lorry, in which he was a passenger.

He had a leg amputated after the accident, at East Bergholt, Essex, in December 1979, and suffered multiple fractures and lacerations which left him scarred for life.

Cot death clue discovered

By Clive Cookson

Researchers at Birmingham University may have discovered a cause for unexplained "cot deaths".

Preliminary evidence from Dr Stanley Salmons and Mr Dennis Gale of the university's department of anatomy indicate that the main muscle protein, myosin, has not matured properly in the diaphragms of babies that mysteriously stop breathing in their cots.

The researchers are using antibodies, supplied by the Institut Pasteur in Paris, to analyse the protein in post mortem samples. The antibodies distinguish the immature form of myosin, with which the baby is born, from the adult form that should develop during the first months of life.

According to the Birmingham hypothesis, the diaphragm, whose muscles control breathing, becomes susceptible to fatigue if the myosin does not mature fast enough. Then any additional stress, such as a cold, could make the diaphragm fail suddenly.

The Foundation for the Study of Infant Death, based in London, has given Dr Salmons and Mr Gale a £21,500 grant to carry their research further over the next two years. Mr Gale emphasized that the project was intended only to identify an important molecular cause of cot deaths.

If myosin immaturity is indeed implicated, then more clinical work would be required to develop the discovery into a practical means of identifying babies at risk, who could be monitored closely.

Loophole in prison repatriation Bill

By Stewart Tiedler, Crime Reporter

Planned government legislation for the repatriation of Britons imprisoned abroad could result in some prisoners serving sentences in British jails for offences not recognized here.

The Repatriation of Prisoners Bill which has its second reading in the Lords next Wednesday follows the Government's announcement in August that Britain would ratify the Council of Europe Convention for sentenced prisoners.

The convention, due to be ratified by 14 countries, including Canada and the United States, says that prisoners can be sent home to serve their punishment only where their offence is recognized in both countries.

The Bill does not lay down that the offence must be mutual, going wider by not being specific. So, a prisoner could be returned from the Middle East to serve a sentence for possessing alcohol.

The National Council for the

Prices held by fresh turkeys

About nine thousand turkeys will have been killed and sent to butchers' shops this week from the farm of Mr Tom Copas, near Marlow, Buckinghamshire (our Agriculture Correspondent writes).

Altogether about 10 million birds will be consumed this Christmas, but four fifths of those will be frozen. 750,000 of them unsold from last year.

Although supermarkets are selling frozen turkeys at less than 50p a pound, the market for fresh birds at between £1 and £1.05 a pound is holding up well, according to Mr Copas.

Unlike Welsh farmers, who expressed fears recently that the glut of frozen birds would undermine their businesses, he is confident that there are still two million families prepared to pay twice the price for better flavour and texture.

"If anything, the trade is coming our way," he says.

Army team to test life at 40° below zero

By Rodney Cowton

A party of British servicemen are to spend a year living in tents and snowholes on a remote Antarctic island which is thought only to have been visited four times.

The party will leave Britain for Brabant Island, more than 600 miles south of Tierra del Fuego later this month. It is almost entirely covered by snow and ice, and apart from facing temperatures of minus 40 degrees centigrade, the expedition will also have to endure force 12 hurricane winds.

The expedition will rely on tents and snowholes for accommodation and will not have a base hut. The objective is to carry out research into survival in harsh conditions.

Stringfellows night club wins court chip fight

The owner of Stringfellows night club in London yesterday won his High Court battle to prevent a frozen-food producer selling chips under his name.

McCain's can no longer use the brand name Stringfellows on their new long thin oven-ready chips, Mr Justice Whitford ruled.

But he suspended his order for 12 weeks to give time for "hundreds of tons of bagged chips to be sold and an appeal to be considered."

Stringfellows club and restaurant in St Martin's Lane was described by the judge as one of the top three in London. During the week-long hearing it was said to be frequented by "beautiful people" and show-business personalities.

Mr Peter Stringfellow, from Marylebone, north London, and his company, Stringfellow Enterprises, brought the action against McCain Foods (GB) of Scarborough, and their advertising agents Reeves Robertsshaw Needham of Kensington, west London. The judge dismissed the claim against the advertising agents, ordered an inquiry into damages and awarded Mr Stringfellow his costs.

Afterwards Mr Stringfellow said that he would celebrate with "a champagne, caviar, but no chips" party.

PC jailed

Nigel Edwards, aged 26, of Llys-y-wern, Sychdyn, near Mold a police constable, was sentenced to three months' jail when he appeared before Chester Crown Court yesterday charged with causing the death of a colleague, PC Ian Grant, by reckless driving in June. Edwards has since left police service.

Radiation check

Shells and seaweed gathered by children of St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic School, Swinton, on an outing to the beach near the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant in Cumbria were checked yesterday for traces of radioactivity by scientists from British Nuclear Fuels Limited. All showed normal background radiation.

Paper closes

The Burnley Evening Star, which started in 1965, will cease publication today with the loss of 68 jobs. Circulation has fallen from more than 30,000 to 16,000.



Eila Karjalainen: a Finnish student.

Blenheim body identified

The girl found strangled in a wood on the Duke of Marlborough's Blenheim estate in Oxfordshire three weeks ago has been named as a Finnish student, Eila Karjalainen, who was 23.

The breakthrough in identifying her body came this week when a walker found her passport, rucksack and diary in a lay-by near Witney.

Det Supt Roger Nicklin said that Miss Karjalainen arrived at Harwich on August 2. She stayed at a hotel in central London until the following Sunday, apparently intending to visit Wales the next week.

Predator beetles imported to protect trees

By John Young, Agriculture Correspondent

Three hundred Belgian beetles of the species *Rhizophagus grandis* have been imported by the Forestry Commission and established in a special breeding unit in Mortimer Forest, near Ludlow, Shropshire, eventually to attack the Great Spruce Bark Beetle (*Dendroctonus micans*).

Unlike *R. grandis*, *D. micans* prefers the bark of conifer trees, especially Sitka spruce, ultimately killing them. Since an infestation was discovered by the commission in August last year, numbers have spread.

There are now restrictions on the movement of timber in the Welsh border counties and in Gloucestershire, Hereford and Worcester, Shropshire and a part of Staffordshire.

Mr Nicholas Edwards, Secretary of State for Wales, told the Commons on Wednesday that 677 infestations had so far been discovered. A commission official said yesterday it was hoped to release about six thousand predators.

Coroner halts heart transplant

By David Cross

When a suitable patient was found at Harefield Hospital in Uxbridge, west London, preparations were made for a helicopter to go to Staffordshire to pick up the heart. But the unit from Harefield was called back when Mr John Wain, the deputy coroner of Stoke-on-Trent, unexpectedly called a halt to the removal of Mr Alcock's heart.

In the only statement which he has issued since taking his decision Mr Wain said that he had stopped the operation because he considered that "the pre-existing condition of the deceased's heart might be relevant to the jury inquest in due course". Yesterday Mr Wain was not available for further clarification of his decision.

But Mrs Jean Alcock, the fitter's widow, of Goldhurst Drive, Tean, has said that she was upset that the dying wish of her husband had not been honoured. "It seems he died in vain," she added. Her mother-in-law, Mrs Dorothy Alcock, also criticized the coroner's decision. Many people with

IT befell on a certain day that a fair damsel came into the court of King Arthur, mounted on a white palfrey. And she spoke to the knights assembled there, saying, "Who among you will take up arms, and set forth on the Quest for the Holy Grail?"

At once, the knights rose up, and summoned their squires and horses. All save one Sir Periwale.

"Comest thou not with us?" enquired his fellows.

"Not I," said Sir Periwale. "My quest is at an end, for I have found this Croft Particular. A light, crisp and exceeding drinkable sherry...for all your hazardous adventures and arduous journeyings, you'll not find its equal."

At this, the knights returned to the Round Table. And, on trying this marvellous potion, agreed forthwith to forget the Holy Grail.

And they bade the fair damsel to do likewise and join them in a glass of Croft Particular.

"Yeah," said Sir Galahad, doing his Sir John of the Wain impression that always got a big laugh at Camelot parties. "Get off yer horse and drink yer sherry."

Finest Pale Amontillado Sherry
Croft PARTICULAR

SLIGHTLY LIGHTER. SLIGHTLY LESS TRADITIONAL.
TO BE ENJOYED SLIGHTLY MORE OFTEN.

Magistrates studying jail sentences for drink drivers after Essex lead

By Kenneth Gosling

Magistrates throughout the country will be in mind the possibility of imposing deterrent sentences when dealing with drink driving cases after this week's sentences on nine drivers at Grays, Essex.

The Bench at Grays sent one man, who had a drink-driving conviction, to prison for six months during hearings on Thursday. Of the others, all first offenders, four were ordered to be detained in police cells for four days, the rest for two days each.

Mr Geoffrey Norman, secretary of the Magistrates' Association, said: "I am sure it will have the effect intended. The prospect of loss of liberty will operate on people's minds, particularly in the Grays area". Mr Norman said there were no examples of other courts taking similar action; but the principle of imposing deterrent sentences, for example, in cases of telephone box vandalism by young

offenders, in incidents of violence and in cases of shoplifting, was a well established one.

"I would have thought generally that this was publicly acceptable", he said.

Mr Norman said since the policy concerning drink driving was announced after the Brewster Sessions in February, only one driver had appealed against a custodial sentence. His six months' imprisonment was reduced to three.

"If anyone should think the deterrent sentence is not a sound principle, their remedy is to appeal", he said.

The Department of Transport, which has launched its pre-Christmas campaign against drinking and driving said: "Our view is that we would not like people to get into that position; it is only to be welcomed insofar as it might act as a further deterrent."

"The whole point of the campaign is not the hope of catching more people but that more and more will not mix drinking and driving".

Mr Charles Noad, chairman of the Grays bench, said yesterday: "Each case is judged on its merits but anybody with a high alcohol reading has a good chance of going to prison and that is heightened if it is a second occasion".

The area has seen a 67 per cent rise over a year in drink-driving cases, the national figure for convictions last year was 75,000, up 4,000 on 1981.

Mr Noad referred to a number of horrific accidents which appeared to have involved drunk drivers. Heavy traffic passes through the area, especially on the A13.

"This is the final deterrent", Mr Noad said of Thursday's sentences. "Maybe other areas are doing the same as us or are considering doing the same".

Mailcoach of the twentieth century

By Michael Horsnell

Like fresh-faced ghosts, three passengers brave the winter chill outside the Pack Horse Hotel in Louth, on the edge of the Lincolnshire Wolds, awaiting the postbus, just as their ancestors did two centuries before them.

The distinctive red and yellow 11-seater Dodge is a world away from the Royal Mail stage-coach which set off from the old coaching inn on the muddy road to London.

But the concept of carrying mail and passengers by road is the same, even though the route followed by Mr John Killick, the postman, is less exciting than that of his predecessors, a 25-mile circular loop round the countryside via Muckton Bottom.

On the way, Mr Killick, aged 49, who collects the fares, stops to empty 13 post boxes.

It is one of three daily services run by the Post Office at Louth, the longest being the 55-mile morning run through Gouthwaite, which takes five hours and 35 minutes because the postman has to deliver the mail on the way.

But the passengers, only the oldest of whom distantly remembers more conventional bus services through the wolds, are patient for it is better to take one's time than to walk and better to keep rural communities in touch with each other than isolated.

The Louth postbus service was launched 10 years ago at a time when rural county councils were desperately seeking ways of divesting themselves of the financial pressures imposed by normal, under-used bus services.

Now the Post Office runs 176 postbus services, predominantly in Scotland, where more experienced postmen have been



All aboard: Passengers of the Louth postbus (Photograph: John Manning).

known to carry the occasional sheep and pick up prescriptions for the doctor for some of their passengers, and the service is expanding south of the border.

Last year postbuses, of which there are now 24 in England, carried 3.3 million passengers miles.

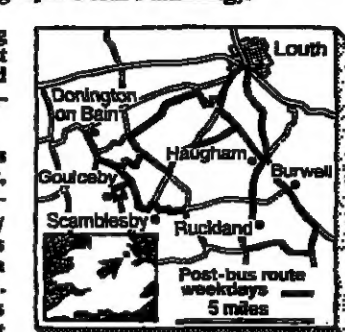
The Post Office, which roughly breaks even on its postbus operation, told *The Times*: "We feel it is very successful, not so much financially but because it carries on the tradition of the Post Office as part of Britain's social fabric."

Lincolnshire County Council pays an annual subsidy of about £600 to the Post Office for the service after the

complicated equation involving fares and the difference in cost between a normal post van and the postbus has been calculated.

Mr Don Nutt, the council's passenger transport manager, said: "We had to take initiatives like this in the early seventies for financial reasons and the postbus has provided a safety net for isolated villages. It is helping communities survive, with all that that means for rural life."

Last year, the Louth postbus carried about 1,500 passengers and raised nearly £500 in fares. The passengers, some of whom live in hamlets with as few as seven houses, are in transports of delight over the bus.



Mrs Pat Henshaw, a pensioner from Broughton, a hamlet with 35 houses, asked: "Where else would you get a postman prepared in all weathers to drop you at your door with a pile of shopping?"

Abandoned cars 'time bombs'

By Clifford Webb, Motoring Correspondent

The growing number of cars abandoned on Britain's streets because of stricter MOT requirements are potential "time bombs" which sooner or later will kill children using them as playthings, the Automobile Association said yesterday.

To spotlight the danger, the association's *Drive* magazine carried out an experiment with a Toyota which had been left for months in a car park near Crawley, Sussex. With the fire brigade in attendance a match was applied to the interior upholstery.

This is the timetable of events which followed:

30 secs: heavy black smoke and flames.

2.5 mins: rubber pipe to petrol tank burns through and the escaping petrol/air mixture ignites in a plume of flame.

6 mins: windows and wind screen shatter. Flames increase dramatically as air rushes in.

7.5 mins: aerosol cans in the boot explode.

8.5 mins: 5 gallon can containing half a gallon of petrol explodes, shooting the car lid 40 yds and setting fire to grass and anything combustible in the vicinity.

16 mins: firemen move in with high pressure water hoses.

Drive comments: "In an average suburban street, the fire brigade would reckon to reach the scene before 16 minutes provided they were informed the moment the car caught fire. But, as our demonstration shows 15 minutes is a long time in a blaze of this type. Imagine our Toyota in a crowded housing estate."

Mr Bob Denman, director of cleansing for the London Borough of Haringey, said: "We have had injuries to kids playing with wrecked cars but as far as fire is concerned, the constant fear is that something really bad will happen. And I am talking about a death."

Haringey towed away 968 abandoned vehicles last year, an increase of 100 per cent in five years. That compares with 439 in Birmingham and 350 in Glasgow. *Drive* reports that the best councils take only two weeks but others take months

Horsewoman fined for smuggling dog

Miss Sheila Wilcox, the leading horsewoman, was fined £500 for smuggling her pet dog, Gipsy, for company after a riding accident in Germany. She was so desperate to have the black, cross-bred Lurcher dog by her side that she persuaded friends to smuggle him back into Britain, bypassing quarantine rules and breaking the anti-rabies laws.

Miss Wilcox, aged 51, four times Badminton winner, and the only woman ever to win in three successive years, yesterday admitted permitting the dog to be landed at Dover in contravention of the rabies laws, and was fined £500 and ordered to pay Gloucestershire county council's £40 prosecution costs.

Magistrates at Winchcombe, Gloucestershire were told that Miss Wilcox, of Shenberrill Hill, Stanton, Gloucestershire, was rebuilding her career after a fall in 1971 which left her partially paralysed, when a second accident happened last May.

She had gone to Germany for a dressage competition but fell again only days before competing.

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Job fight by social worker

A social worker was dismissed after he allowed one of his staff to have a love affair with a disabled woman, an industrial tribunal in London heard yesterday, when the social worker claimed unfair dismissal and sought reinstatement.

Mr Tom Hulley, aged 36, had earlier stopped two relationships between staff and residents at St Michael's House, Welwyn Garden City, where he was manager, because he felt they were harmful.

But he decided that the affair between Miss Patricia Gaye, aged 23, who is confined to a wheelchair, and an assistant, Mr Philip Lucy, aged 23, was not dangerous, Mr Herbert Laming, director of social services for Hertfordshire County Council, said.

Mr Laming said that Mr Hulley, from Stevenage, should have sought advice and approval from his superiors.

He said that Mr Lucy was given a written warning. "He had acted properly and reasonably in taking guidance from Mr Hulley," he had been reassured that the relationship could go ahead.

Mr Laming said that he had been told about the affair in July by another resident. He dismissed Mr Hulley from his £11,000-a-year job in August after investigating the allegation.

The hearing was adjourned until February 2.

Whitehall-police clash on drugs

By Stewart Tindler, Crime Reporter

The Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers may be heading for a collision over Whitehall criticism that chief constables are not responding strongly enough to Britain's increasing drug abuse problems.

Senior officials are understood to be extremely unhappy at the association's "lack lustre" reaction to a government policy statement this week by Mr Leon Brittan, the Home Secretary, on curbing drug abuse.

Mr Brittan put forward the Government's plans in a speech on Wednesday. At the same time, the association issued a statement to coincide with his announcement.

The four-sentence statement, which went largely unreported, said that police shared the concern about drug abuse. While the police were working

with customs officers on various initiatives the problem, none the less, was one for society as a whole.

There was a need for an "inter-agency approach" involving the courts, doctors, teachers, social workers, and parents.

The statement was greeted in Whitehall with the feeling that the police were little short of abdicating their own responsibility in fighting drug abuse. It was seen as another illustration of the difficulties the Home Office believes it is encountering.

For some years there has been growing frustration that the association, which represents senior officers in forces across England and Wales, has not taken the increase drug abuse sufficiently seriously. Civil servants believe that the

police have been partly influenced by the series of corruption incidents found within Scotland Yard's drugs squad during the 1970s. As a result, customs investigators have taken the initiative in many major cases, leaving the police with minor investigations or small possession cases.

Within London, Scotland Yard is known to feel that the current drugs squad of about 40 men is inadequate to meet the demands of the capital's large drugs black market. Surveys by the police have not shown any undue public concern which might be met by increasing the squad.

Whitehall would like to see greater emphasis on dealers rather than the small-time street operators, and indications of more energy and commitment from chief constables.

Sailing ships rot in Falklands grave

By Tony Samstag

At least 500 wrecked British and American 19th century ocean-going sailing ships are rotting off the Falkland Islands because there is no preservation programme, the Falkland Islands Foundation says.

Its newsletter published this week described the ships as "the finest natural museum of maritime antiquity in the world" which "in the turmoil of post-war Falklands are every bit as threatened as the wildlife".

Sir Peter Scott, who established the foundation in 1979, praised military efforts to

minimise disturbance of the square riggers.

Mr Michael Menson Bound, a maritime archaeologist and an islander, says that the ships "are mostly survivors of the great trades which flourished during the last century with the west coast of South America and the required best ships in order to survive the heavy loads and the constant slamming west-cries around Cape Horn".

But many could not take such punishment and limped into the Falklands harbours, turning them into the world's largest

nautical graveyard. The wrecks have survived because of the islands' isolation and climate.

Mr Bound says that the American vessels *Charles Cooper* and *Snow Squall* the most important. The *Cooper*, a packet ship built in 1856, "dominates Stanley's waterfront" but is in a critical condition.

The *Snow Squall* is "the only true survivor of a clipper ship" of which only about 40 feet is above water.

Some ships have been bought by American museums

3 years for man who 'reenacted' film chase

Melvin Cross, aged 29, who crashed through a police roadblock and into a car with a family of four still inside, was re-enacting the scene from the film *Vanishing Point* Norwich Crown Court was told yesterday.

In the film the driver of the car is chased across the United States and dies in a fire after crashing the car into a police roadblock. After watching the film Cross stole a car from Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, drank a bottle of vodka and, as he smoked cannabis, was then chased by police up to speeds of 90mph before crashing into a hastily set up roadblock at Wormegay, Norfolk.

Mr John Farmer, for the prosecution said Police Constable Malcolm Reeves leapt for his life seconds before the car driven by Cross hit an almost new Mini Metro, which had been stopped by the police at the roadblock and the police car. Still inside the Metro was Mr Gordon Phillips, a teacher, of Holly House, Fincham, Norfolk, his wife Josephine, his son Joshua, aged 10 and daughter, Holly, aged seven.

They suffered minor injuries but their car was written off and was replaced at a cost of £3,500 with the police paying the bill.

Cross, unemployed, of Kersey Avenue, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk, was jailed for three years and banned from driving for five years after pleading guilty to motoring offences.

Cross, who had numerous motoring convictions, was told by the Recorder Mr Gerald Draycott:

Within five weeks of being released from jail for a previous conviction of reckless driving you committed an even worse offence. I have never listened to a more horrifying case of driving than yours and you are extremely lucky you are not facing life imprisonment for manslaughter.

You are highly dangerous. Someone who takes a car then drinks and takes drugs is like a wild beast and as dangerous as a lion which he escaped from its cage."

Restoration to start on Whitehall site

By John Young

The restoration of Richmond Terrace in Whitehall, which for the past three and a half years has been cocooned in a giant polythene envelope, is to go ahead. A contract has been awarded to Taylor Woodrow Construction, and work will start next month.

The once handsome Georgian terrace stands opposite Downing Street, on a route used by millions of tourists every year.

In 1969, it was scheduled for demolition to make way for a new Home Office building, but there were angry protests and, after a public inquiry, the Government agreed that the facades at least should be retained, along with Norman Shaw's New Scotland Yard.

In 1973, it was vacated by the Foreign Office as unsafe. Two years later the Government commissioned a study into its possible use as offices for MPs and in 1978, Mr Peter Shore, then Secretary of State for the Environment, announced that restoration was to go ahead at a cost of £20m.

It is now estimated that the complete restoration project will cost £28m.

MPs support Bill designed to break conveyancing monopoly

Commons

The House of Commons, designed to weaken the conveyancing monopoly of solicitors received its second reading in the Commons by 96 votes to 76 - majority 20, after a closure motion had been carried by 100 votes to 14, a majority of 86.

This occurred after Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Solicitor General, had announced that the Government intended to introduce its own legislation to extend the right of conveyancing not just to registered land, with which the Bill deals, but to all land, to solicitors employed by building societies and banks, subject to safeguards.

He indicated that the Government intended to proceed promptly so as not to delay the introduction of additional competition. The Government's mind was not closed to the possibility of solicitors employed by other than building societies and banks being included, but in some cases there might be conflict of interest.

The Director General of Fair Trading would ensure that competition was fair. The Government wanted to see house buying made simpler and cheaper.

We have decided (he said) that more can be done to consider the process of conveyancing as a whole with a view to simplifying the practice and procedure wherever possible and will set up a special committee under the Law Commission to examine various proposals and to ensure that the work going on in many areas is coordinated and the work kept under review.

The Government intended that the committee should come forward with recommendations for cheapening and simplification of convey-

ancing and house purchasing which it would be anxious to adopt. The Law Society supported this.

The sponsor of the Bill, Mr Austin Mitchell (Great Grimsby, Lab), in moving the second reading, said the introduction of competition by solicitors was keeping the process of house buying in the age of the quill pen. The Bill made provision for the licensing of conveyancers.

The process of house buying could be greatly simplified by grouping all the various agencies, legal, estate agents, banks, and building societies, in one group rather than leaving it to the house buyer to coordinate all the house buying activities.

All that was preventing such a move was the monopoly on conveyancing held by solicitors; it stopped the process dead.

The Bill would clear away some of the obstacles which prevented at least a move towards a comprehensive system.

It was not as if drawing up conveyances was a particularly skilled task in most cases. All it required was an ability to read and to put names on a form, and that was scandalous.

The monopoly not only stopped other people doing the work; it even stopped solicitors competing with estate agents as was allowed in Scotland. The introduction of competition would make conveyancing easier, cheaper and more efficient.

Times had said the Government would do well to enact the Bill and "take the protestations of the solicitors with a pinch of salt".

This monopoly (he said) is odious, it is unpopular, it is contrary to the spirit of the age and it must go.

Sir Walter Clegg (Wye, C), chairman of the all-party solicitors group said it used to be the case that there was no competition within the profession but now that there was

but solicitors had a fund into which all paid to cover the solicitors who defaulted. Unrestricted conveyancers would have to get together in groups for such a purpose.

Mr Kenneth Weetch (Ipswich, Lab) said that conveyancers already had corporate policy which covered them for dishonesty.

Sir Walter Clegg said that the Bill had a major deficiency in providing no test for competence.

Mr John Munn (Oxford, Opp) said that conveyancers on legal affairs, said if he thought the legislation in its final form would result in a disservice to the consumer or lesser the protection given, he would not support it. While there were criticisms to be made, he did not think the aims could be anything but beneficial.

Conveyancing was a £1,000m industry and formed the bulk of many solicitors' incomes so the question that had to be asked was whether the system was meeting today's needs in the best way.

There was need for a careful approach to make sure that one monopoly was not simply changed for another, or for a duopoly, if that was the right word. If the banks and building societies were to do the work, there would have to be changes in their legislation and he was aware of any keenness by the banks to take it on and the building societies were divided.

The Bill would act as a catalyst given the need for a fundamental examination of the law of property transfers and the adoption of today's technology, but it might be a matter for the Law Commission and that body ought to be given the resources to take on with the job.

Sir Patrick Mayhew, the Solicitor General, said the Government was on solid common ground with the sponsors in their objectives. Lack of competition with a conveyancing practice acted just as insidiously to induce unnecessary high charges and indifferent service as did lack of competition with a greengrocer.

Buying a house was probably the most expensive and momentous

personal transaction anyone undertook and if it went wrong, it could cause disaster and misery. The issue seemed to be how best to achieve competition with adequate safeguards for the consumer.

But the protection in the Bill was inferior to that given by present arrangements. Equally, the Government felt the existing degree of competition was unduly restrictive.

There were three main options - to develop competition between solicitors in private practice; to enable solicitors employed by organizations like banks and building societies to do the work; to widen the field of conveyancers still more by establishing some form of licensing system to permit non-solicitors to do it.

Competition between solicitors has already improved greatly in recent years, and the third option would not provide the necessary protection. But extending conveyancing rights to employed solicitors offered a serviceable means by which a further element of competition could be injected.

It was essential to protect the interests of the borrower and it was necessary to consider interested parties about how potential conflicts might be overcome. It was right that that should be looked at before legislation. It was an instance where competition could be increased without prejudicing protection for the consumer.

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New bureaucracy feared

House of Lords

Two Bills designed to combat discrimination against the disabled received unopposed second readings in the House of Lords. Such discrimination was a revolting contemptible evil, the Earl of Longford (Lab) said about his Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Amendment) (No 2) Bill to make discrimination illegal and set up a Disabled Persons Commission. He said discrimination persisted on a wide scale.

The debate also covered the similar Disabled Persons Bill. That was promoted by Lord Campbell of Croy (C) who said it would make the Disabled Persons Commission the chief instrument for investigating difficulties and discrimination experienced by disabled people.

It did not create new laws and new offences in an area difficult to

define and prove - deliberate discrimination against the disabled.

Earl Atlee (SDP), in a maiden speech, called for a screening process to discover children suffering from dyslexia.

Lord Glenamork, Under Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, said the Government believed the difficulties which so many disabled people had to contend with were the result of a variety of specific practical problems which required specific practical answers. These would not be removed by some sort of "catch all" law.

Both Bills were unacceptable to the Government. Should either receive a second reading, the Government would not provide substance for them at any further stage.

Both Bills were read a second time.

Protest over equal pay

Viccount Whitelaw, Lord President to the Council and Leader of the House, promised to convey to the Government the feelings of peers who protested in the House of Lords that in spite of an earlier Government defeat in the House over the Equal Pay (Amendment) Regulations, the regulations were to come into force on January 1, 1984.

The vote in the Lords on December 5 resulted in a defeat for the Government by four votes, when peers expressed dissatisfaction with the details of the regulations.

After the Earl of Gower, Minister of State, Privy Council Officer, had announced that the regulations would become operative on January 1 and that they were in conformity with European Community law, some peers, led by Lord McCarthy, for the Opposition, protested at the decision.

Lord Skinnell (Ind) said that time and again opinion in the Lords took a certain line on policy affecting legislation but the Government paid no attention and the matter was completely ignored.

I am concerned (he said) about the implementation of ideas ventilated in this House. (Cheers.) The Earl of Gower assured him that it was not the case that the Government did not take into account the views expressed in the House. It took them most seriously. Viccount Whitelaw said he must make clear that far from not paying attention to the House his job as leader was to pay strict attention to what the House said.

I shall make sure (he went on) that the Government fully appreciates the feeling in the House. The House, constitutionally and correctly, did not vote against the regulations but expressed a view.

Israel denies offering safe conduct for evacuation of Arafat

From Christopher Walker, Jerusalem

The Israeli Government yesterday stepped up its war of nerves against Mr Yasser Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organisation leader, by flatly denying that it had given any guarantee of safe conduct to the Greek authorities for his proposed evacuation from Tripoli.

The denial, which followed reports of contacts between Israel and Greece over the plan, was made by a senior Government official at a briefing for foreign journalists. "Israel did not give any commitment to anyone about Arafat," he said in answer to repeated questioning.

The briefing, which came hours after Israel's fourth naval bombardment of PLO positions around the north Lebanese port was apparently designed to maintain the high level of international apprehension surrounding the evacuation. Asked if the central thrust of Israel's policy was to keep the world guessing, the official acknowledged candidly: "Maybe that is the name of the game."

Despite the denial of contacts, direct or indirect with the Greeks, it is still considered unlikely that Israel will launch any attack once Mr Arafat and his 4,000 men are on board their Greek vessels under escort from French and American

warships. But increased Israeli military action in Tripoli up until the final moment of embarkation is considered a firm possibility.

Yesterday, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, held private talks with Mr Donald Rumsfeld, President Reagan's special Middle East envoy, at which the subject of the evacuation was understood to have been discussed. Neither party would give any account of the meeting to the press.

Earlier, Mr Moshe Arens, the Defence Minister, played his part in the policy of attempting to prevent, or at least delay, the PLO guerrillas departure by again expressing the hope that Western nations would not "assist the evacuation of the PLO with their weapons to other locations where they can continue their terror activities against Israel and non-Israeli targets".

The minister claimed that Israel was using diplomatic channels to try and persuade any nation preparing to assist in the evacuation to first get "a commitment from Arafat that he will lay down his arms and stop all terror activities".

Speaking after a memorial service for the 28 Israeli Druze Arabs so far killed in the Lebanon war, Mr Arens said on Thursday: "If we cannot con-

vince them to forbid Arafat and his terrorists to operate from anywhere else, we will have to consider the situation and decide what to do about it."

He then added ambiguously: "I hope we will not come to the point where we will be forced to open fire on the ships evacuating Arafat and the terrorists from Tripoli."

When asked directly whether Israel would, in fact, take such far-reaching action, Mr Arens declined to engage in what he described as "speculation".

Apart from the psychological gains from the climate of uncertainty, the Israelis are also determined on a rigid point of principle never to be seen giving a public guarantee of safe passage to Mr Arafat, whatever the Government's real intentions towards the evacuation may be.

● **ATHENS:** The 6,222-ton Greek ferry-boat Verghina, flying a United Nations flag, was the first of five Greek passenger ships to sail from Greece yesterday for Tripoli (Mario Modiano writes).

A Greek Government spokesman said that the five ships would meet up at Larnaca, in Cyprus from where French war ships would escort them to Lebanon for the rescue operation.



Yuletide: Lance-Corporal Sowders, of the US peace-keeping force in Lebanon, rescuing his Christmas tree from a tent hit by rocket fire.

West sees hope in Pretoria's Angola offer

From Zoriana Pysirsky New York

The South African proposal for disengagement of its forces in southern Angola has been met with surprise and scepticism by black African countries, which saw it as a ruse to gain Western sympathy. The West, however, thought it offered possibilities for settling the issue of Cuban troops in Angola.

In a letter to the United Nations on Thursday, Mr R. F. Botha, the South African Foreign Minister, said Pretoria was prepared to disengage its troops on condition that Angola provides assurances that it would not exploit the situation.

This meant that neither Angola's forces, nor Cuban troops protecting the MPLA regime, nor Swapo guerrillas operating from Angola with the aim of securing Namibia's independence, could make moves in the area. Although it was not spelled out, the offer sounded much like a proposal for a demilitarized zone.

The proposal in itself was not new, since it had been the subject of negotiations between South Africa and Angola which broke down earlier this year. South African officials said the date set to begin disengagement, January 31, was negotiable and meant to give impetus to a resumption of talks.

The offer came as the Security Council met at Angola's request to consider South Africa's occupation of southern Angola. Africans saw it as a preemptive move to escape serious calls for sanctions and reduce Western Pressure for a Namibian settlement.

But the proposal fits in neatly with attempts by the five-member Western contact group to place the removal of South African forces from southern Angola within the context of Cuban withdrawal. Angola has rejected the idea of connecting a Namibian settlement with the departure of Cuban troops and, although the proposal is linkage by another name, it would seem to make it more palatable.

South Africa has said it will not give up Namibia unless it has an undertaking that the Cubans will leave. Although only the United States supports it in this position, many other countries are privately convinced that the two issues must go hand-in-hand if there is to be a Namibian solution.

The Angolan initiative in the Security Council is considered to be part of a domestic campaign aimed at rallying Angolans against the rebel Unita organization, which operates in the south with South African support and poses a threat to the stability of the government in Luanda.

While South Africa has never officially admitted that its forces are entrenched in southern Angola, Western analysts estimate that 2,000 to 3,000 troops are in the area.

No evidence Andropov is working again

Moscow (Reuters) - US and West European diplomats say they have no evidence that President Yuri Andropov is back at work after his four-month absence.

Reports from Washington that western embassies in Moscow had already sighed him.

"A Politburo motorcade has been seen driving regularly to and from the Kremlin but so far there is no evidence that Andropov is inside it", one diplomat said.

A senior Communist Party spokesman, Mr Leonid Zamiatin, said last week that the 69-year-old President was recovering from an illness and already working again. Speculation now is whether he will appear at a plenum of the party's Central Committee on December 26 or 27.

Cocaine haul in New York

New York (AP) - A record 1,600 lb of cocaine with an estimated street value of £110m was seized and three men arrested in what the authorities said was the largest drug seizure ever in the New York city area.

The cocaine, described as high-quality Colombian, was found in dufl bags and boxes when a combined federal, state and city drug task force arrested the three men late on Thursday in Queens Borough.

Minister quits

Santiago (Reuters) - Chile's Foreign Minister Senor Miguel Schweitzer, resigned after 10 months defending the record of President Augusto Pinochet's military government. Last week the UN General Assembly passed its annual censure vote on Chile's human rights record.

Envoy moved

Moscow (AP) - The Soviet Ambassador to Angola, Mr Vadim Loginov, has been "relieved of his duties and transferred to another post," Tass said. He is replaced by Mr Arnold Kallinin, ambassador to Portugal between 1974 and 1982.

Basque blasts

Las Bardenas (Reuters) - An officer and a soldier were slightly injured when two bombs planted by suspected guerrillas went off at a military shooting range near this northern Spanish town.

Ice breaker

Yamoussoukro (AP) - Ghanaians working in the Ivory Coast gave an airport welcome to Ghana's military leader Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings who arrived for talks with President Felix Houphouet-Boigny, their first bilateral contact. Until now both have regarded each other with open suspicion.

Killings in Indonesia 'should be over now'

From Our Correspondent, Jakarta

The spate of summary killings of alleged criminals which human rights groups claim have left up to 4,000 dead in Indonesia this year were supposed to have ended in August. Mr Mochtar Kusumaatmadja, the Indonesian Foreign Minister said yesterday.

Mochtar, speaking at a press briefing, said: "The official position is that these things were not supposed to have occurred after the President's (National Day) speech in August when he said these measures have to be carried out within the dictates of the law."

The Foreign Minister said he had received notes from several foreign governments expressing concern over the killings, but said he had not yet seen a message from the International Commission on Human Rights which is also understood to have expressed concern over the killings.

The shootings of alleged criminals in main cities met with little opposition and considerable public approval when they started early this year. Newspapers carried front page photographs of bound and bullet-ridden bodies, many of them carrying the tattoos worn by ex-convicts gangs.

Anger at 190 pc inflation

From Our Correspondent, Jerusalem

Israeli trade unionists yesterday launched a series of mass protest demonstrations directed at the Government's failure to solve the serious inflationary spiral now destined to produce an all-time record inflation rate between 190 and 200 per cent by the end of the year.

The three days of protest were prompted by the publication of official statistics showing that prices rose by 15.2 per cent during the single month of November, bringing to 40 per cent the erosion in wages registered over the past two months.

Despite the latest grim economic statistics, Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the new Prime Minister, pledged publicly on Thursday that there would be no cutback in the costly programme of continuing to expand Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank.

The failure of his new Finance Minister, Mr Yigal Cohen-Orad, to exercise restraint on runaway inflation is posing a growing threat to the

Government's chance of winning the next election. All recent opinion polls have placed the ailing economy above the continuing involvement in Lebanon as the main cause of the Likud Government's declining popularity.

The new Finance Minister is now faced with the beginning of a workers' protest movement led by the Histadrut, the Israeli equivalent of the Trades Union Congress, aimed partly at his efforts to cut back the almost total index-linking of all inflationary price rises. The demonstrators are demanding an immediate payment of 17.9 per cent in the allowance given to every salaried employee in Israel to recompense them against the inflation rate.

A Treasury spokesman attempted to play down the severity of the latest price rises by claiming they had been expected. He blamed them squarely on the previous policies of Mr Yoram Aridor, who resigned ignominiously from the Finance Ministry in October

after details were leaked of his controversial scheme to switch the whole Israeli economy onto a US dollar basis.

But the claims did little to soften the effect of the latest price rises (including a 188 per cent increase in the cost of food products in the last 12 months) which, according to economic experts, means that the annual inflation rate for 1983 will be close to 200 per cent. This compares with recent government pledges that the rate of increase would soon be reduced, and inflation cut back to double figures.

During the past 11 months, prices in Israel have already risen by 160.5 per cent, ensuring that the annual figure will easily outstrip the previous record total of 132.9 per cent inflation reached in 1980 - also under a Likud government.

The new series of workers' demonstrations is just one of many pointers that the runaway rate of price increases is now beginning to threaten the whole social fabric of the country.

Police deter Solidarity protests

From Roger Boyes, Gdansk

A huge concentration of police in Gdansk and other Polish cities yesterday deterred Solidarity supporters from obeying the appeal of the underground opposition to stage large scale demonstrations and marches in town centres.

Riot police quickly dispersed a group of young Gdansk shipyard workers chanting: "Solidarity, Solidarity" in front of the port's railway station. Hundreds of militia vehicles, including water cannon trucks, stood by in the streets of Wroclaw, Nowa Huta and Warsaw but at nightfall the situation was reported calm.

The main flashpoint was Gdansk. Here, in the birthplace of Solidarity, Mr Lech Walesa was due to deliver a speech setting out a programme for Solidarity supporters defining pressure points on the Government and areas in which the banned trade union should concentrate its activities.

But Mr Walesa, who is suffering from a high fever, did

not appear at the towering monument outside the Lenin shipyards which commemorate the striking workers who were shot on December 16, 1970. Instead, his wife Danuta - who also received the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of her husband - made the 500-yard trek from St Bridg's Church to the Monument.

Several hundred riot police blocked off the approach roads and in a series of checkpoints sifted away the few hundred sympathizers who had followed her. In the end, only Mrs Walesa, a frail figure thickly coated against the sub-zero temperatures, and her secretary were allowed to lay a wreath.

"Speeches have to have audiences," Mr Walesa told reporters who telephoned his home, explaining why it was pointless to try and deliver his programme to a sea of blue uniforms. Shipyard workers leaving the yards after the end of the morning shift took in the row upon row of militia vehicles and their accompanying func-

tionaries and avoided the monument, walking instead to the railway station.

Here several dozen, perhaps as many as 150, started to chant but were quickly stifled by the police, who blocked the trams, cordoned off one side of the street and yelled at passersby to get into their trains or stay indoors.

In Warsaw, around Constitution Square where workers were supposed to have followed the instructions of the underground, to gather, the police parked militia vans and checked the documents of Christmas shoppers. Women were told to empty their bags and Christmas trees were unwrapped to prove that they did not contain weapons or leaflets.

Several hundred Solidarity sympathizers subsequently walked through one of the main thoroughfares of the capital, but they did not chant or brandish banners and the police left them alone.

East block attacks on peace activists

From Our Own Correspondent, Warsaw

The policy of stationing new Soviet missiles in Eastern Europe has been accompanied by an extensive security police campaign against independent peace activists. Arrests, raids on flats, the interrogation of relatives, warnings to employers: it all seems a long way from the relative calm and immunity of the Greenham Common protest.

The official perception of the East European peace movement has been changed by the West German parliament's decision to approve deployment of US cruise and Pershing 2 missiles. Now, an outspoken peace protester in East Germany or Czechoslovakia is immediately suspected of damaging the vital defence interests of the state if he or she opposes the stationing of Soviet missiles.

This is a more serious offence than anti-state activity - the all-purpose anti-dissident legislation - applied against the peace movement in the past.

Two East Germans, Fraulein Beate Bohley and Frau Ulrike Poppe, of the Women for Peace group, were arrested recently after meeting a visiting British CND activist, Miss Barbara Einhorn, who was detained on the East-West border. Notes of the meeting were confiscated.

The Women for Peace group has at least 100 members, who have been organizing unofficial meetings. There are several small independent peace groups in East Germany - the most notable was in Jena, before arrests crippled it. Most shelter under the wings of the Protestant church.

The church, in turn, has been trying to steer the movement into opposing the militarization of East German society - compulsory military education

in schools, for example - rather than opposing the new Soviet missiles, which is dangerous territory.

Both East Germany and Czechoslovakia have agreed to accelerate deployment of "operational-tactical" missiles on their territory in response to the missiles in West Germany.

This evoked rumblings among independent peace campaigners in Czechoslovakia, but without strong church protection, the movement has not thrived. Police have picked up anyone questioning the rationale of the Soviet deployment.

In Brno, police interrogated pupils from three schools after circulation of a petition opposing the missiles. Teachers were warned and reprimanded and one pupil, Petr Pospichal, was arrested when he travelled to Prague.

Earlier this year about 300 young people - officially described as drunken hooligans - made use of the government-sponsored Prague Peace Congress to stage a private peace demonstration. The sentiment behind it seemed to be a vague devotion to youth-cult figures - above all, John Lennon, the former Beatle - and their commitment to universal disarmament.

Although dissidents have had trouble recently in Hungary - above all, it has been difficult to maintain the flow of *samizdat* literature - the peace group known as Dialogue has continued to function. It does not attract the same interest as in East Germany, but it has been in the forefront of the debate about how far East European peace activists should separate the campaign for peace from the campaign for civil rights.

Polish film makers resist party rule

From Our Own Correspondent, Warsaw

Poland's film-makers have virtually excluded Communist Party members from their governing board and have approved the idea of a special studio unit to produce films of interest to Roman Catholics.

The decisions showed that Poland's cultural associations - in the main banned or reorganized because of their political sympathy with Solidarity - still possess some independent life.

Andrzej Wajda, Poland's leading director responsible for such films as *Man of Iron* and *Danton*, returned to Poland to address the congress of the film-makers this week, having been earlier persuaded to give up the presidency of the union.

"As a chairman, I have lost," he told the congress, "but this defeat could be turned into a victory if the association takes control of its own fate."

The film-makers responded well to his appeal. A Central Committee secretary, Mr Waldemar Swirgon, had earlier told the film-makers that it would be unwise to elect Mr Wajda - whose support for Solidarity has always been strongly stated - that they should avoid political statements of support for the banned Writers' Union for example, and should have a large Communist Party representation. Instead, only five members are in the party and they - including the vice-chairman, Mr Jerzy Hoffman and the president, Mr Jerzy Kawalerowicz - were chosen more for their acknowledged skill as film-makers rather than for their political status.

One young film director said that as the majority of Poles were believing Catholics, it was only appropriate that a production unit be set up to make films on church themes.

Party directors opposed this but the new chairman of the association, Mr Janusz Majewski, said that the proposal should be put to a vote and the suggestion was carried overwhelmingly.

Whether the Government will make funds available for such an idea seems doubtful however - it is difficult to imagine a project that would upset the hardline Marxists in Prague and Moscow.

The main hardliner at the congress, Mr Bohdan Porciba, criticised Mr Wajda and the presentation of a prize to him by young film-makers.

ANC man arrested in South Africa

From Ray Kennedy Johannesburg

Five whites and an alleged black African National Congress (ANC) guerrilla have been arrested in the Johannesburg area. Major-General Frans Steenkamp, the head of the South African Security Police, said the whites, including two women, were arrested as a result of investigations after the conviction for high treason last month of Mr Carl Niehaus, aged 23, a white student, and his fiancée, Miss Jansie Lourens. They are being held incommunicado under the Internal Security Act.

General Steenkamp described the black guerrilla as a well-known and trained ANC terrorist and said arms, including Soviet-made limpet mines, had been seized. Last week, Security Police announced the arrest of two suspected ANC guerrillas after a shootout in the Coloured Johannesburg suburb of Eldorado Park.

Meanwhile, security was stepped up in Johannesburg yesterday after a bomb blast on Thursday evening in a city-centre office of the Department of Foreign Affairs. Seven blacks, women office cleaners, were slightly injured in the explosion which occurred only a few minutes after the evening rush hour.

It was the third attack on government offices in Johannesburg - all carried out with limpet mines - this month.

● Sea change: Signs apologizing for apartheid will be put up around whites-only children's paddling pools on the beach front at Durban, South Africa's main coastal resort.



Many a slip: Reaching for a woman customer's lighter, Sydney waiter Richard Daldini fell from the Harbourwatch Restaurant's balcony and was left hanging 50ft up

Vatican attacks boxing as coma victim worsens

Milan (Reuters) - The Vatican newspaper yesterday questioned the morality of boxing, as the condition of an Italian fighter who collapsed last weekend deteriorated.

An editorial in the *Osservatore Romano*, citing the case of Salvatore La Serra, who is in a coma, said no sport or spectacle could be accepted by a civilized conscience if it put human life at stake.

Other sports, such as car racing and mountaineering, were arguably more dangerous,

Global abuse of journalists continues

By David Cross

The International Press Institute, the watchdog of press freedom, has issued more protests about abuses against journalists this year than at any time during its history.

Free speech is respected in only a small part of the globe, the institute says in its annual report published today. Highest on the list of protests is Turkey. Journalists and editors too numerous to mention have been sentenced to heavy fines or stiff jail terms, charged with offences which most people in

the free world would not even consider crimes.

Most of Eastern Europe continues to jail journalists and writers, as does most of Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Asia. "Some do not even bother with the luxury of direct measures like the bullet",

Newsmen and publishers have found that speaking the truth is not a guaranteed right of the individual, but something to be suppressed or distorted, the institute says. The signatories to the United Nations Charter on

Human Rights or the Helsinki Agreement are breaking their word. "Today, only a small part of the globe can boast that free speech is respected and honoured. The rest of the world is gagged."

The institute also criticizes the free press for reporting too little about abuses against journalists. "Those governments who are the worst offenders are often guided by the reactions of the outside world," it says.

The report also singles out South Africa as a country where press freedom is under constant

attack. More than 60 per cent of the editors of the main Sunday newspapers have been convicted or threatened with prosecution.

In many other countries, journalists face other dangers but their plight rarely comes to light. "Many governments around the world continue to dispose of troublesome reporters silently. Some are 'disappeared', never to return, while others are placed in hospitals for the insane, only to be released when they are 'cured'."

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DWS

Mauroy intervenes in car dispute as recession bites deeper in France

From Diana Goldes, Paris

The recession, which came later to France than to most other industrialized countries, is finally beginning to pinch, causing unions and management to harden their positions and the Government to quake.

The announcement on Thursday by the car manufacturer Peugeot-Talbot that it is to close indefinitely from Monday its factory at Poissy, outside Paris, where workers have been on strike for the past week in protest against redundancy plans, is almost certainly a sign of worse to come on the industrial front.

Peugeot, France's largest privately-owned car manufacturer, which is expected to lose 2 billion francs (£170m) this year, took the decision to lay-off its 17,000 workers at Poissy in an attempt to force the Government to accept its proposals for nearly 3,000 compulsory redundancies at the factory. The redundancies are part of an overall slimming plan for the company involving the loss of nearly 10 per cent of its 18,000 workforce.

It is a sign of the gravity with which the Government is treating the dispute that M. Pierre Mauroy, the Prime Minister, has himself decided to take the matter in hand. Emergency meetings were taking place between the Peugeot management and the Government yesterday.

The long-brewing crisis in the car industry could not have come to a head at a worse time for the Government. Within the last week it has been severely attacked for the alleged inadequacies of its industrial policy by two groups from which it might have expected more

support - the Socialist CFDT union, and the Communist Party, which only a fortnight ago signed a new agreement with the Socialists pledging greater loyalty to the Government.

Describing the Government's industrial policy as "secretive, inflexible and incoherent," M. Edmond Maire, the moderate general-secretary of the CFDT, accused the Government of following up its "magnificent promises" with silence. "They say nothing, they announce no plans, no schemes, no figures. They keep the unions in complete ignorance."

The Government was spending huge sums amounting to 52 billion francs (£4,300m) this year to try to stop the industrial decline, but nothing was being done to prepare for the future, he complained. He feared that the Government's "march into the dark" would lead workers "to despair and revolt."

The CFDT's cry of alarm is not totally devoid of self-interest, however. The union has been much criticized for being a "toady" of the Government, and at the social security elections last October, it saw itself drop from its traditional number two position in the trade union hierarchy to number three. It has lost 15 per cent of its membership over the past year.

It was also important for the CFDT that the Communists and the Communist-led CGT union should not be seen to be the only defenders of workers' jobs which are now being lost in the industrial sector at a rate of 10,000 a month, twice the rate at the beginning of the year. Furthermore, lay-offs are ex-

pected soon in coal, steel, construction, engineering, chemicals and textile industries.

A few days earlier, M. Georges Marchais, the Communist Party leader, wrote to M. Laurent Fabius, the industry Minister, saying that it was "high time" that the Government followed its words by actions, and showed "greater rigour in keeping its promises in the crucial field of industry."

As M. Fabius was away, it was M. Max Gallo, the official Government spokesman, who launched the counter-attack. "To believe and to make others believe that you can always prevent redundancies, keep non-profitable businesses going, and accept ever greater losses, is to render a disservice to the workers, firms and the country, and disarm France in the tough field of international competition," he insisted.

The Government's reluctance to help laid-off workers has also been referred to recently by M. Jacques Delors, the Finance Minister. "Some enterprises are declining, others are being born. The longer you keep the former in an oxygen tent, the more it will cost the taxpayer, and the less money there will be for new projects. And at the end of the day, instead of having 100 unemployed, you will have 200 unemployed," he said.

Figures announced yesterday show that the number of unemployed rose by 3 per cent last month, having been kept stable at around 2 million or just under 9 per cent of the workforce for more than a year.

The Government continues to insist that it will take what measures are necessary to prevent unemployment rising



Vetran's treat: President Mitterrand of France talking in Belgrade yesterday with Mr Dragomir Tulumirovic, aged 90, a veteran of the First World War, holding his unit's regimental flag. The French President placed flowers at a monument commemorating French assistance to Serbia during the First World War.

On the second day of his 3-day visit, he urged Moscow and Washington to resume negotiations (Dessa Trevisan writes).

He said the conference on European disarmament, which is due to open in Stockholm next month, might provide an opportunity for a "useful dialogue". This in itself would be a "positive factor", he stated.

M. Mitterrand, who is on a three-day visit here, singled out the role played by the neutral and non-aligned countries at the European security review conference in reaching a compromise, urging them to persevere in their efforts at the forthcoming European conference on disarmament.

President Mitterrand went on to emphasize the importance which France attaches to the role Yugoslavia is playing between East and West, as well as in the non-aligned movement.

Plea to UN over activist's trial

From Richard Owen, Moscow

The unofficial Soviet peace organization has appealed to the UN Secretary-General and to Western peace movements to prevent the impending trial of Mrs Olga Medvedkova, one of the group's founding members.

An appeal yesterday by the Group for the Establishment of Trust between the USSR and the USSR said Mrs Medvedkova and four other unofficial activists had been arrested by police in October during the trial of Mr Oleg Radzinsky, a fellow member.

The peace campaigners were manhandled and detained in a derelict building by plainclothes policemen who refused to identify themselves.

The five were later released, but last week Mrs Medvedkova was charged with assaulting a police officer and ordered not to leave Moscow. She is to appear at the Moscow prosecutor's office on Monday.

Members of the group said they feared the authorities would arrange an unusually swift trial and sentence. Mrs Medvedkova, aged 34, a geographer and wife of the group's founder, Dr Yuri Medvedkov, is likely to be sentenced to three years' hard labour under the penal code.

Mrs Medvedkova said the four other activists had testified that she had at no time engaged in violence and that the peace group's policy was one of passive resistance. The group says it avoids both criticism of Soviet state policy and direct clashes with the authorities, but has been systematically persecuted since it was founded in June last year.

Dr Medvedkov said the decision to try his wife was part of a KGB secret police campaign to "pick off the group's steering committee one by one". The committee maintains strong links with Western peace movements and was visited by

more than a hundred Western campaigners this year.

Mrs Medvedkova said the authorities were apparently taking revenge for an incident last May when three founder members of the Greenham Common women's movement visiting Moscow took her with them to a meeting with the officials to listen to an exposition of the Group of Trust's aims and philosophy.

The Soviet group also said that any statements from prison by members should not be taken as genuine "if they conflict with our present convictions". This follows the release of a purported letter of repentance written by Mr Radzinsky from Siberian exile. It reached Western correspondents and also appeared in Mrs Medvedkova's postbox, even though the Medvedkovs have received no mail for a year. Their telephone has also been cut off.

Seaga storms to pyrrhic victory

By Jeremy Taylor

Jamaica faces the prospect of five years with a one-party Parliament. Having thrashed independent and fringe candidates in a mere six constituencies in Thursday's elections, Mr Edward Seaga, the Prime Minister and the ruling Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) now control all 60 seats in the House of Representatives. The other 54 seats were won uncontested.

Mr Michael Manley's Peoples' National Party (PNP) refused to contest them in protest at Mr Seaga's failure to honour a 1980 agreement on electoral reform.

Mr Seaga had called a election two years early citing a crisis of confidence after the PNP had called for his resignation as Finance Minister. His personal popularity had increased after he helped to engineer the American-led invasion of Grenada six weeks ago and the affairs had also distracted attention from the Government's failure to produce the economic recovery it promised. Mr Seaga's gamble has now bought the JLP another five years.

However, the Opposition boycott leaves a large question mark over the election result. Mr Manley, who argues that the three-year-old voting list disenfranchises 15 per cent of the electorate and contains 100,000 names of people who have died or migrated, knows that Mr Seaga has a very difficult task ahead in producing economic recovery, as well as expected to push for the swift implementation of the agreed electoral reforms followed by fresh elections.

Jamaica's economy is still far from the "deliverance" that Mr Seaga promised when he swept to power in 1980. He managed to negotiate a large support programme from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) borrow more than \$1,000m (£714m), produce the first positive economic growth in nearly a decade and revive tourism.

But Jamaica has been unable to earn the hard currency it needs. A weak market for its main commodity, bauxite, together with rock bottom sugar prices and heavy debt servicing - \$530m this year - have robbed the island of precious foreign exchange.

Unemployment is steady at around 26 per cent. Inflation is increasing sharply after being brought below 5 per cent and last summer factories were working at an average of only 49 per cent of capacity.

A series of experiments with multiple exchange rates and a parallel currency market failed to bring in the expected flow of foreign exchange and at the end of September Jamaica failed for the second time this year to meet the quarterly performance test of the IMF, severely embarrassing Mr Seaga, causing a 43 per cent devaluation and leading directly to premature elections.

A new 15 months standby credit with the IMF is being completed.

Mr Seaga promises that the lack of Parliamentary opposition will not result in an unwise or insensitive Government.

But the election result could lead to increasing political tension or a resurgence of political violence.

Author who accused paper jailed

From Mario Modiano, Athens

The author of a book accusing the top-selling Athens daily *Ethnos* (The Nation), a leftist tabloid, of being an instrument of disinformation of the KGB, the Soviet intelligence service, was sentenced by an Athens court to two years' imprisonment.

Mr Paul Anastasiadis, a Cypriot journalist working in Athens as a correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph* and *The New York Times* was found guilty on two counts of libel. He was set free pending appeal.

His book, *Take The Nation In Your Hands* (the paper's main advertising slogan) was banned by the court, but after the appeal was lodged, the order was rescinded.

Mr George Bobolias, publisher of *Ethnos*, who has business links with the Soviet Union, and the paper's editor, Mr Alekos Filipopoulos, were awarded damages of £110 each.

The court's verdict rejected the defendant's case that his book offered conclusive evidence that *Ethnos* had been published in cooperation with the KGB's disinformation department to influence Greek public opinion in favour of Soviet policies.

Coup officer swindled orphan fund

From Richard Wigg, Madrid

Antonio Tejero, who held the Spanish Parliament at gunpoint during the 1981 coup attempt, has been accused of investing for his own gain, money which he had promised would go to the orphans of "victims of terrorism".

Tejero, a former Civil Guard lieutenant-colonel, is serving a 30-year sentence for military rebellion. He gave the promise about the money after *El Alcazar*, the extreme right-wing Madrid daily, collected more than 18m pesetas (£80,000) from an appeal it launched to help him to pay the fines the court martial also imposed.

The accusation against Tejero is one of the conclusions of an all-party committee set up by Andalusia's regional parliament to investigate the collapse last year of the Rural Savings Bank of Jaen, which is the centre of Spain's olive oil industry.

The committee, after a one-year investigation, found that Tejero invested the money transferred to him by the bank just before it was saved by government intervention. Other investors were not so lucky and lost money.

Denmark faces election on January 10

From Christopher Follett, Copenhagen

A general election was called late on Thursday night in Denmark for January 10 following the failure of the 15-month-old Conservative-Liberal minority coalition Government to secure a parliamentary majority for its 1984 budget.

The Finance Bill, the hub of the austerity policies of the four-party Government of Mr Poul Schluter, Denmark's first Conservative Prime Minister since 1901, was rejected by 93 votes to 77 in the Folketing (Parliament) after a grueling 12-hour debate.

The Bill contained drastic public expenditure cuts affecting social services and sickness and unemployment benefits designed to reduce Denmark's state budget deficit from this year's 62,000m kroner (£4,400m) to around 58,000m kroner (£4,084m), the first drop in the country's budget deficit in a decade.

Mr Schluter said that he was asking the electorate for an improved mandate to continue his Administration's policies of economic revival. The Social Democrats, the largest opposition grouping, voted against the budget for the first time since 1929 along with two leftist parties when the anti-tax Progress Party of Mr Mogens Glistrup, the tax lawyer currently serving a three-year prison sentence for gross tax fraud, refused to support the Government after insisting unsuccessfully on further cuts in public spending.

Only the small centrist Radical Party supported the coalition in the vote. The defeat of the Government on its economic policy followed a recent series of humiliating parliamentary rebuffs on foreign policy issues, notably NATO missile deployment policy which Mr Schluter has been unwillingly to oppose by the opposition.

Recent opinion polls predict a landslide victory for Conservatives who stand to almost double their present 26 seats in Parliament at the cost, however, of their coalition partners. This makes it extremely doubtful whether Mr Schluter will be able to form a majority Administration after re-election.

Only two out of Denmark's political parties will run in the elections. There are only nine in the current 179-seat parliament. The last Danish general election was in December 1981.

Poll shows Mondale is Democrats' choice

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

The approach of Christmas brings good news for Mr Walter Mondale but disappointment for Senator John Glenn. According to a poll carried out by *The Washington Post/ABC News*, the former Vice-President is continuing to poll ahead of Senator Glenn and six other Democrats seeking the 1984 Presidential nomination.

Mr Mondale's support among registered Democrats is now equal to that of all the other candidates combined. The poll showed that Mr Mondale is the choice of 49 per cent of registered Democrats, compared with 23 per cent for Senator Glenn, 10 per cent for the Rev Jesse Jackson and 8 per cent for Mr George McGovern.

One of the poll's most significant findings is that Mr Mondale is running stronger against President Reagan than Senator Glenn. Mr Mondale and Mr Reagan are now neck-and-neck among registered voters.

The poll also shows that Mr Mondale's support is highest where it counts most if he is to gain the Democratic nomination next year - among those most likely to vote in Presidential primaries which are scheduled to get under way in February.

A separate poll carried out by the Louis Harris Organization has indicated that President Reagan's overall approval rating has begun to slip after rising sharply following the Grenada invasion.

UN move threatens Antarctic Treaty

From Zoriana Pysarski, New York

A United Nations study on the status of Antarctica and the exploitation of its resources has been requested by the General Assembly in a move that could jeopardize the meticulously constructed Antarctic Treaty and pave the way for universal decision-making in the region.

Any attempts to unravel or tamper with the treaty which sets aside conflicting claims to sovereignty over the continent and contains vital disarmament provisions, are expected to encounter stiff resistance from the United States and the Soviet Union. The treaty is one of those rare instances in which the two super powers find themselves in agreement.

The treaty has been in existence for 24 years without attracting much notice, comprising an alliance of 14 initial consultative parties.

The report provides a period of grace for the treaty's 16 consultative parties who joined in the consensus resolution calling for the report rather than an immediate confrontation, they chose the lesser of two evils, but the issue will undoubtedly become an emotive one in a year's time. Delegates recalled that the genesis of the now concluded Law of the Sea treaty was a seemingly innocuous statement by Malta calling for the sharing of the sea's wealth.

This time Malaysia, which explored ways to make its international mark, came up

with the idea of launching an international debate on Antarctica, a claim which was quickly echoed by a majority of the UN's membership who do not like the treaty's "gentlemen's club".

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Argentina to find out why 7,000 disappeared

From Douglas Tweedale, Buenos Aires

President Raul Alfonsín has appointed a commission to investigate the disappearance of more than 7,000 people who vanished during the Argentine military campaign against urban terrorism in the 1970s.

The 16-member commission, which includes journalists, authors, churchmen and scientists known for their concern about human rights violations will have access to military and Government records in order to determine what happened to the missing persons.

The commission will have no power to try those responsible for the murders, but has been instructed to submit all evidence of possible crimes to the courts. It is to produce a report on its findings in six months' time.

Argentine human rights groups have documented the disappearance of more than 7,000 people who are believed to have been kidnapped and killed by Government security forces during what the military has called its "dirty war" against left-wing subversion from 1976 to 1981.

But relatives of disappeared people and human rights activists believe the figure of missing people is closer to 30,000, due to the many incompletely documented cases and instances of disappeared persons whose families did not report them as missing out of fear.

Meanwhile, former President Isabel Peron, who was overthrown by the 1976 military coup, prepared to leave Argentina after a one-week visit during which she met President Alfonsín and began what is expected to be a thorough purge of the Peronist party which she formally heads.

Senora Peron was flying back to Madrid for what she promised would be a brief stay before returning to take full charge of the movement she inherited from President Juan Peron.

Iran's war fever fuels Iraqi panic

By Richard Dowden

As the Gulf war grinds through its fourth year, the Iraqis are seeking peace at almost any price short of capitulation but Iran's internal politics dictate that it must continue until the Baghdad Government falls.

The war is going well for Iran. It can sustain a steady pressure on Iraq, draining its resources and forcing it to be dependent on the Gulf States. Meanwhile the heavy casualties - some estimates that Iran has lost nearly a quarter of a million dead - help to maintain the revolutionary fervour and concentrate the minds of the people on an external enemy. The Khomeini regime has invested too much in the war to end it with anything less than the fall of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

It is sometimes suggested that the return of the Iranian Army from the front would create problems for the regime; but troops have been purged and indoctrinated and the political capital accrued from the defeat of Iraq could keep the regime going for years.

The war channels the energies of the militant youth. One Revolutionary Guard told me: "When we have rid Iraq of Baathism, we shall liberate Lebanon and Palestine!"

While the tactics of the Pasdaran, the Revolutionary Guards, are similar to Hitler's Brown Shirts or Mao's Red Guards, their fervour mingled with leftist fury gives them a self righteousness and the conviction of having God on their side. "Our revolution is to change people not just structures," one told me. "I have a duty to protect you from harming yourself by failing to obey the law of God just as I have a duty to stop you jumping off that building."

Supplied with fleets of new white Nissan Jeep-style vehicles they force their way through the Tehran traffic with an arrogant disregard for traffic laws or civil police. Their uniforms are dull-coloured clothes, anorak or jacket, open-neck shirt and at least three days growth of beard. Some of them have bulges under their jackets. They pursue sin as vigilantly as political opposition and are as likely to

be seen stopping a woman for not having a proper veil as leading the crowds in chanting slogans against their enemies.

The question in many people's minds is whether they can be controlled or whether they and their leader, Mohsen Rezaei, will become an independent force.

It is the Pasdaran who have effectively made Khomeini the undisputed ruler of Iran. They have crushed the Mujahadeen, the Islamic leftist opposition, and recently they attacked the offices of the Freedom Party, the only surviving secular party in the Majlis (parliament).

Although there is great discontent in Iran over the war, the shortages and the imposition of Islamic law, there is no organisation able to harness it into political opposition. Only the Grand Ayatollahs present any resistance to their fellow cleric but since their main objection to Khomeini is that the Ulama (clergy) should not be involved in politics they cannot take their opposition further without undermining their own position.

The question every observer asks is what will happen when Khomeini dies. Although he is apparently removed from the structures of government, all power passes through his hands and his word is law. But he represents more than political leadership and his power will not die with him. If they grab his mantle his successors will be able to rule in his name for some time. Provision has been made for the election of one, three or five successors but it seems likely that Hojatoleslam Akbar Rafsanjani, the Speaker of the Majlis, will assume the reins of government and Ali Hussein Montazeri the only Grand Ayatollah who totally supports Khomeini, (he is also his son-in-law) will assume a figurehead role. These two politicians have been making moderate statements over the past year trying to reassure the professional and commercial classes.

But there is little evidence that the Ayatollah is near to dying. He is 81 but is said to be in good health and has a brother aged 96. He and the Gulf war could be with us for some time.

UN move threatens Antarctic Treaty

From Zoriana Pysarski, New York

A United Nations study on the status of Antarctica and the exploitation of its resources has been requested by the General Assembly in a move that could jeopardize the meticulously constructed Antarctic Treaty and pave the way for universal decision-making in the region.

Any attempts to unravel or tamper with the treaty which sets aside conflicting claims to sovereignty over the continent and contains vital disarmament provisions, are expected to encounter stiff resistance from the United States and the Soviet Union. The treaty is one of those rare instances in which the two super powers find themselves in agreement.

The report provides a period of grace for the treaty's 16 consultative parties who joined in the consensus resolution calling for the report rather than an immediate confrontation, they chose the lesser of two evils, but the issue will undoubtedly become an emotive one in a year's time. Delegates recalled that the genesis of the now concluded Law of the Sea treaty was a seemingly innocuous statement by Malta calling for the sharing of the sea's wealth.

This time Malaysia, which explored ways to make its international mark, came up

with the idea of launching an international debate on Antarctica, a claim which was quickly echoed by a majority of the UN's membership who do not like the treaty's "gentlemen's club".

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The poll also shows that Mr Mondale's support is highest where it counts most if he is to gain the Democratic nomination next year - among those most likely to vote in Presidential primaries which are scheduled to get under way in February.

A separate poll carried out by the Louis Harris Organization has indicated that President Reagan's overall approval rating has begun to slip after rising sharply following the Grenada invasion.

Only two out of Denmark's political parties will run in the elections. There are only nine in the current 179-seat parliament. The last Danish general election was in December 1981.

Why Britain's rebate was blocked

From Our Own Correspondent, Brussels

An intense power struggle is under way between the three main institutions of the EEC to decide who actually rules in the Community. As a result, Britain, this week saw an agreed budget rebate blocked by the Parliament, while the whole Community is teetering on the brink of a destructive cash crisis.

The power struggle derives from the fact that the 14-member Commission has been unable to prevent the Council settling into the driving seat of all the Community processes. At the same time, the Parliament, anxious to make a name for itself before next June's direct elections, is jostling for attention.

The Council can claim the right to be top dog for one reason - it pays. All the money

to run the Community has to come from the different member states, whose representatives sit as the Council when they meet. They may not always agree. Indeed, in recent months, they have been able to agree on distressingly few things. But they all recognize that they must collectively retain control over the purse strings.

With the failure of the Athens summit to accept reforms essential if the Community is to continue and develop, the Commission has begun a late bid to seize back the initiative. And, in doing so, it is relying heavily on the support of the Parliament, which is also resentful of the Council's power.

The day after the summit ended, the Commission produced a declaration and announced a new strategy - or rather announced its intention of returning to the old strategy. In future, it said, the Community would return to the original role book laid out in the Treaty of Rome. That said, in essence, that the Commission proposes and the Council disposes.

Mr Gaston Thorn, the Commission President, spelt this out clearly before the Parliament last Tuesday. In future, he said, the Council would not be allowed to make its own proposals it would have to confine itself to amending Commission proposals. The Commission would stick firmly to its ideas.

Mr Thorn described the chaotic way the preparations for Athens had led inevitably to

failure. With too many countries making too many proposals, the inevitable happened.

Parliament applauded him. Like Mr Thorn, it has been resentful of the way the Council has been usurping its rights. It took the council to court for failing to agree to a transport policy in line with the treaty obligations. With the failure of Athens, it believes that it too can steal the limelight as the responsible European institution and can thus attract popular support in the June elections.

The vote to freeze the British rebate was not revenge on Britain for the failure of the summit. It was taken because this gesture was the only one it could legally make - and there remains doubt as to its legality

- to protest at the Athens' failure.

With the Community so short of money, the Council is much more anxious to reassert itself. France, perhaps more than any other country, is particularly keen to restrict Parliament's role.

This was behind French ideas before the Athens summit to fix strict limits to Community spending. The system it proposed would have reduced Parliament's authority in the budget process to virtually nothing.

There is no great belief in the Council that the Commission has the leadership or initiative to win more power.

In the words of one diplomat: "These boys don't have the guts to do anything but moan."

هكذا من الأصل

Japanese conservatives head for victory despite vague poll predictions

From Richard Hanson, Tokyo

Pollsters remained remarkably vague over just how well Japan's ruling Conservative Liberal Democrats (CDD) will perform when voters go to the polls in Sunday's general election, the first in three and a half years, as candidates took advantage of the last few hours of an indecisive 15-day campaign.

What is virtually certain is that Japan will wake up on Monday to find the conservatives still in charge. Opposition parties are expected to face mixed results, with the biggest the Japan Socialist Party (JSP), battling uphill, Japan's largest opposition party, the Japanese Communist Party (JCP), therefore, will continue to pursue the increasingly outward-looking and nationalist policies being shaped by Mr Yasuhiro Nakasone, the Prime Minister.

Indeed, the election has taken on the look of an internal LDP

popularity contest, rather than a referendum on national policies. Most importantly, the results will probably fore-shadow Mr Nakasone's chances of remaining as leader in a party vote late next year.

Mr Nakasone has campaigned hard to project a statesmanlike image emphasizing diplomatic accomplishment since coming to office a year ago. Two days before the vote, the Prime Minister announced he will visit China in March. The visit is timed significantly to mark an exchange of official visits by US and Chinese leaders.

The strategy may work. Mr Nakasone modestly claims that this party will achieve at least a simple majority in the election. Most surveys say the LDP, in power since 1955, will come close to a stable majority of

about 270 seats in the 511-member Lower House allowing control of most important committees.

This compares with 286 LDP seats when Mr Nakasone called the election to end more than a month of parliamentary deadlock which followed the Oct 12 conviction of Mr Kakuei Tanaka, the former Prime Minister, on bribery charges in the Lockheed trial.

Projections of the results generally have allowed for such wide margins of error as to make them meaningless. The *Yomi Shimbun*, for example, a harsh critic of Mr Nakasone and Mr Tanaka, who controls the biggest faction in the LDP, said yesterday that the LDP would win 278 seats. This is the highest among the polls published so far, but it is hedged within a margin of 267 to 289

US accepts Australian nuclear arms curb

From Tony Dubondia Melbourne

Canberra believes the United States has accepted its position that nuclear-armed warships will be allowed to use Australian dry docks only in emergencies. But talks with Britain have not been so fruitful.

Mr Bob Hawke, the Prime Minister, said on Thursday that, after telephone discussions between Mr Gordon Scholes, the Defence Minister and his British and US counterparts, differences with Washington had been resolved.

However, talks between Canberra and London have not been so successful after the dispute over the ban on the British aircraft carrier *Invincible* using the navy dry-dock at Garden Island, in Sydney Harbour. *Invincible* now seems certain to go to Singapore for repairs. The ship is scheduled to spend Christmas in Australia.

"I would think in respect of the United States the matter is resolved - they understand and there will be no problems there. There's a bit more discussion going on with the United Kingdom. This matter will be resolved in a way which is totally satisfactory to our allies and to us, without any change in principle."

"These lurid suggestions that our allies in some way or another are threatened are just hogwash."

Mr Scholes said he had initiated the talks with Mr Heseltine, the British Defence Secretary and Mr Caspar Weinberger, the US Defence Secretary, to discuss "the means by which the existing guidelines on visits by allied naval vessels can be developed to take account of special requirements for dry-docking."

The talks were preliminary and would be followed by others between officials from the three countries.

On Thursday Mr Scholes visited the *Invincible* and lunched with her captain and the British High Commissioner, Mr John Mason. Afterwards, Mr Scholes blamed the media and the federal opposition for the problems over the issue of dry-docking nuclear-armed vessels.

Treasure chest

Tokyo (AP) - A bakery lorry driver, scrounging for boxes in a Tokyo dump, discovered 30m yen (£150,000) worth of diamonds, emeralds, sapphires and rubies discarded in error by a jeweller's staff. His reward for turning them in was £15,000.

Panda prizes

Peking (Reuters) - Chinese peasants are being offered rewards of up to 500 yuan (£175) for saving starving giant pandas, the *China Daily* reported. The reward is about double the annual income of the average peasant.

India's cars to lose their 1950s look

From Michael Hamlyn, Delhi

The look of India's roads is about to suffer a drastic change. "It is a revolution," exclaimed one of the senior civil servants who is masterminding it.

At present the cars on streets here look as though they might have popped out of a film made in the 1950s. If you remember the Morris Oxford of that era you have the image of the Ambassador, the most popular transport in the country; indeed the only car made here that comes near to taking comfortably the full weight of an Indian family.

Remember the old Fiat 124? That is the other principal car on the road. A small car, seriously underpowered all the same, which looks a trifle more dashing than the heavy, round-shouldered Ambassador.

The only other Indian car is now out of production, but there are still a number of them around. They are based on the sharp-looking Triumph Vitesse of the latter 1950s.

Foreign cars are not much seen. When they are they belong either to diplomats or to pop stars. The cost of import tax is horrendous.

But this week a new generation of cars began to appear.

On the birthday of her late son Sanjay, Mrs Indira Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, formally inaugurated the assembly line of a new car, planned by Sanjay as a people's car. It is produced by a Government-owned factory specially built just outside Delhi and is called the Maruti - named after the goddess of the winds.

The building of the factory, like everything concerned with Sanjay Gandhi was controversial. People complained that their land was taken from them at unfairly low prices for the factory. Sanjay Gandhi was a personal friend of Mr Bansi Lal, the Chief Minister of Haryana, where the Maruti factory lies.



Revolution ahead: The present 1950s-style look of traffic

Mexico's democratic tyranny

By John Carlin

President Miguel de la Madrid has said on several occasions that he will not stoop to repression to preserve his party's traditional stranglehold on Mexican political life. But this week hundreds of soldiers allegedly used guns, clubs and tear-gas to quell protests by members of a left-wing party in the impoverished Mexican south.

Despite heavy government restrictions on press coverage, reports have surfaced of many injuries after thousands of men and women in Oaxaca, fought troops on Tuesday over possession of the town hall, a potent symbol for Mexicans of political authority.

On Wednesday soldiers and police arrested 300 members, including all the leaders, of the local left-wing Coalition of Workers, Peasants and Students (COCEI).

Bishops from three states in southern Mexico have condemned the Government-in-



President de la Madrid: Empty promises?

spired action which comes at a time when opposition political parties of left and right are vociferously denouncing a wave of alleged fraud by the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in recent local elections.

The COCEI claims that the PRI wrested power from them unfairly in municipal elections in early November. Subsequently they refused to relinquish possession of the town

hall, which they had held since winning elections in March, 1981.

Gun-toting PRI henchmen have a history of terrorizing COCEI sympathizers in Juchitan.

President de la Madrid came to power a year ago with expansive claims that he would "morally renovate" traditionally corrupt Mexican politics. But after "clean" elections in July yielded triumphs for the opposition unprecedented during 50 years of uninterrupted PRI rule, the PRI has been winning elections in other states by its usual, astonishingly ample margins.

Past experience in Mexico has indicated that, whenever its massive political authority is under threat, the PRI's lurking capacity for violence and fraud will tend to rise to the surface. Mexican human rights groups claim that more than 600 people have "disappeared" for political reasons in Mexico in the last 10 years.

THE ARTS

Theatre



Susan Fleetwood as Prince Charming: Skillful note of ardour

Tradition served up limp

Cinderella Lyttleton

Much as the nation may hunger and thirst for a return to traditional Christmas pantomime, the National Theatre has gone beyond the call of duty with this limp museum piece.

The work of Bill Bryden, Trevor Ray and the company, it is a *faux naïf* exercise, requiring the audience to respond to the story as if they had never heard it before. The style is directly opposite to that of the Players' Theatre's Victorian burlesques. And although there is a safety curtain decorated with faded advertisements for Eilman's Embrocation and Bull Dog Bottled Beers, it relates to no particular period.

The idea is to conjure up a timeless romance, drawing on the old routines and painted scenic effects of a vanished age, and leave the story to do its work. Resorting to the most destructive word in my vocabulary, I can only describe the result as "tasteful".

On the design side, there is a glaring disparity between the sets and costumes. William Dudley's drooping and wing pieces take you from a wintry opening to a sunny finale by way of an elaborate sequence of

delicately muted interiors and pastoral prospects.

Against them, Deirdre Clancy dresses the company in bright metallic tights and harsh primary colours. The intention seems to be to draw maximum attention to the artificiality of the spectacle; asking spectators simultaneously to take the story straight and to view it as if between quotation marks.

The same thing applies to the dialogue, most of which consists of exasperatingly panto couplets, full of badly scanned lines and tortuous inversions: none of which is ever played for a laugh. You can admire the skill with which Susan Fleetwood's gleaming voluptuous Prince manages to extract a note of heartfelt ardour from the tongue-twisting banalities she has to get through; but more striking is the sheer perversity of the operation.

How, one wonders, can an acting company of this quality have cooked up such rotten parts for themselves. I had hopes of Marsha Hunt's transformed Dandini ("Charming's name, Ruling's my game"), but the part soon fades out into a smirking side-kick. Trevor Ray, as the Baron, is credited with no characteristics whatever apart from a habit of turning up as a Scout Master, a Red Indian, and other rig-outs.

School for Scandal Duke of York's

I liked John Barton's production very much at the Haymarket in February, and enjoyed seeing it again. Christopher Morley's perspective set of receding processions, knowingly borrowing motifs from the Haymarket's decor, gains from the intimacy of this tiny jewel-box as much as it loses in point.

And the elegant austerity of its sepia fabrics and bare wood floor fits the production's qualities: alert intelligence and an awareness, never outweighing the comedy, of the darker realities of trying to build a loving marriage in a bitchy society.

There was always, incong-

uously, another side to the production: farcical business and interpolations more silly than successful. Donald Sinden's Sir Peter Teazle and Beryl Reid's Mrs Candour were very naughty at times but are now more under control (only just, in her case). Both are very funny, she as a "little painted poppet" (as Garrick said of Dr Johnson's wife) who beneath her protestations of outrage at scandal is a very nasty old lady, he as a robustly complacent but decent Georgian Gentleman with more good-heartedness than guile.

Nicola Pagett, the new Lady Teazle, has an abrasiveness and sparkle, more a chastened *amoureuse* than a dizzy butterfly poignantly coming to her moral senses. Clive Francis, another newcomer, mines

As for the Ugles, a nut-cracker-jawed Derek Newark and Robert Stephens snaking on like a pensioned-off geisha, take comic make-up to the limit, but otherwise occupy an aridly undercharacterized zone of spotted bloomer jokes and groan puns.

Meanwhile, a sizable pit orchestra confines itself mainly to supplying piano and violin accompaniments for parlour song-book items and pumping out Paderewski's minuet for the *bal masqué*.

There are more rousing numbers, but even then Mr Bryden's stage looks underpowered - as, in the sight of the Prince, dancing with Janet Dibley's colourless Cinders surrounded by an inert half-circle of guests.

The pace of the production is leisurely, even in the routines of Jack Shepherd and John Tams, as the brokers' men who come on saying "We are the brokers' men". The only figures to benefit from this are the reluctant Demon (James Grant) whom Mr Bryden has boldly imported from the Glasgow Empire; and the wordless decorators, whose duel with the brushes and paste earns its laughs from the extreme of relaxed slow-motion.

Irving Wardle

Joseph's schemings less for their cynical selfishness than for polished comeliness, uttering his pious maxims in a wisecrack's voice belying his youthful looks.

Some touches have lost sharpness, notably the exquisitely comic auction scene, with Charles idly holding the crucial Sir Oliver portrait in his free hand while the old gent, unrecognized, fascinatedly awaits its fate. But Michael Silberg's Charles, a wastrel who like Lord Rochester is never quite sober, and Michael Denison's ripe Sir Oliver happily reappear, along with Dulcie Gray's drily detached Lady Sneerwell and Gordon Gostelow's lovably uncaring Mr. Moses.

Anthony Masters

Radio

Strong ideas at a quiet pitch

"I wouldn't want them to be too cautious, but I would want them to be sensible." Thus, in our 1983 Reith Lecture, Sir Douglas has explained his doubts about the serious inadequacy of resources and support which always undermines a party in opposition and the failure of successive governments to face the fact of a better informed, less biddable electorate.

He has gone on to examine what else might be done, rejecting many attractive alternatives on cogent arguments of impracticability. But he has left standing a number of interesting possibilities, including the permanent royal commission, which ought to be a lasting approach to governments if they fail to explore them.

Indeed, in seeking more responsive and efficient government, Sir Douglas has done us the service of identifying important areas in which it is neither, and while making plain the difficulties of doing better, he has left us in no doubt that better is both desirable and possible.

The final lecture can be heard again tomorrow (Radio 3) and there will be a discussion of the entire series on January 25 at 8.15pm (Radio 4), not next Wednesday as announced by continuity and in a recent *Radio Times*.

As a radio playwright, Jane Beeson has established a reputation as an acute, sensitive observer of human relationships. Her work presents a quiet, well-ordered surface, but we know from a phrase or a tone of voice that below the surface all is far from well. So it was in *The Deception* of the Thrush (Radio 4, December 5

and 11; director, Cherry Cookson).

Louise (Anna Nygh) goes off to New York leaving her much older cohabitant, Bernard (Richard Pasco), and his 17-year-old daughter Claire (Phoebe Nicholls) to fend for themselves. But Claire has overheard a conversation between Louise and Bernard's younger business colleague, Richard (Nicholas Farrell) which leads her - and us - to fear that Louise may use the trip as an opportunity to leave Bernard.

We listen through Claire's ears, sensitized by what she knows, and pick up many dubious signals from the adult world. Can Claire, as she would like, protect her father from what she thinks is going to happen? But it doesn't happen. Louise returns on schedule, brimming with affection. And we are wrong at this point to suspect the rebound from a rather nasty scene with Richard in New York and to wonder what the future holds?

If this was radio drama near its best, something of its worst can be heard in David Beatty's serial, *The Magic Carpet* (Radio 4, Sundays and Wednesdays; director, Brian Miller). Listening to this story of the R101 catastrophe, you may indeed wonder what decade we are in. I have not often heard dialogue, characterization and radio writing skills at such a low level since the mid 1960s nadir of *Afternoon Theatre*. The performances are made to match. But perhaps it is all quite appropriate for a drama about gasbags...

David Wade

Concert

Opposites attract

Lontano/Martinez Purcell Room

Writing of Webern's Four Pieces for violin and piano in the current *Musical Times*, Arnold Whittall makes the highly provocative suggestion that we have been wrong to look for seeds of unity in atonal music of this sort, that we should hear rather a range of contrasts displayed and completed. Perhaps this is something that performers of Webern have known all along.

Certainly the performers of these same pieces, Ruth Crouch and Shelagh Sutherland, allowed the first movement simply and gently to play out its balance of oppositions, with evenly sustained violin notes and justly weighted piano chords that had relinquished all shaping effort.

The faster numbers, though, demanded and got a more hectic engagement, for it is only when the notes are few that they can wholly dislocate themselves from any unifying force.

On the other hand, there is Brian Ferneyhough's ironically titled *Unry Capsule*, the Anna-purna II of flute music, where the "capsule" is a quarter-hour stretch of the most fiendishly difficult music spinning off in every conceivable direction. Here, too, the performer is meant to be frustrated in his attempts to bend the music to

his own purposes, since there is so very much to think about, and Ingrid Culliford last night came closer than anyone else in my experience to the ideal of dedication.

She openly acknowledged the strain she was under while sticking there and achieving a thoroughly remarkable intensity of effort and variety of effect. A concluding gasp was her one moment of self-dramatization, thoroughly justified.

If Ferneyhough is one of the few composers still seriously concerned with the energy of fragmentation in Webern music from around 1910, Ligeti well represents the alternative comic viewpoint. It was a good piece of programming to follow *Unry Capsule* with his *Noves aventures* and its absurd drama of disintegrated music for three singers and seven players.

Penelope Walmsley-Clark, Linda Hirst and Bruce Ogston acted out their myriad vocal personae with happy enthusiasm under well-timed direction from Odaline de la Martinez.

Miss Walmsley-Clark took a quite different role, that of eloquent but ice-cold enchantress, in Oliver Knussen's setting of an Apollinaire vision, *Océan de terre*. This beautifully made score, variously globular and sprightly, was firmly tackled by Lontano.

Paul Griffiths

Television

Hearty mischief

A kind of ill-health clinic where the disaffected affluent go to be stuffed with expensive wines, subjected to unaccustomed exercise, and patronized by the proprietor was the situation of Andrew Davies's black comedy *Heartattack Hotel* on BBC2 last night.

Usually the two functions of over-indulgence and over-exercising are separated. Both frequently have great expense in common, with less of a guilt-feeling, and less satisfaction perhaps, attaching to the latter.

Despite the coincidence of gourmet living with a regimen calculated to strain an SAS man, none of the guests in this hotel had any early suspicion of mischief afoot. Nor were they alerted by the extraordinary nature of their companions or the extravagant behaviour of the owner, played just short of extravagantly by Michael Gough.

The hero, a doctor - 40, fed-up, and fast-fading - is seeking

without much optimism to dissipate his ennui with his mistress, a nubile dynamo less well-bred but of harder disposition and game for anything or, it appears, anybody.

One such game finds her in bed with a corpse, and by this time we were aware that the denouement would be as corpse-strew as the last act of *Hamlet*. The owner later comes clean, expressing his belief that "we feel we can help them (the guests) into the darkness with dignity".

It was sustained by good acting - particularly by Amanda Hillwood as the nubile one, Hugh Fraser, the doctor, Robert Lang as a constantly erupting estate agent, and Madge Ryan, the owner's wife - a luxurious setting, and the direction of Mike Vardy. It was more an occasion for the occasional chuckle than continuous laughter, but it did well enough, as one would expect with Rosemary Hill as producer.

Dennis Hackett

Opera

Earthbound

Hansel and Gretel Bloomsbury

The Bloomsbury Theatre is celebrating Christmas, and its hosting over the last two or three years of a stimulating run of "fringe" opera productions, with a show of its very own *Hansel and Gretel*, long absent from London's professional stages, is the theatre's first house production, and the main sponsor, Prudential, has given free tickets for a theatre-full of underprivileged children on Christmas Eve.

In view of all this it would be nice to report, with Gretel, the "this place must be enchanted". But, alas, it is not. Not only for the sweetness of her voice is Eileen Hulse's Sandman one of the most potent forces of the evening. Humperdinck's music, full of echoes and surprises, of forest murmurs and sparks of Straussian magic, is flattened by the theatre orchestra and Christopher Fiffeld to a soporific mezzo-forte of mood and movement.

On stage too, the dramatic tension that is lacking in Christopher Renshaw's staging

has to be generated by rather a lot of smoke without, a very much fire. A few light bulbs twinkle nicely round the angels' scaffolding frame, or wink fearfully behind the wily forest bushes. In Robin Don's Habitual land of early 1970s chic, Hansel and Gretel, caught between realism and the search for a style, spend their time limning up in a ratty arch set of little exercises devised for them by Sally Gilpin.

They sing well enough: Jill Washington's Gretel (taking turns with Catherine Benson) is sweet and nimble; Maria Aguz's Hansel (next week Jane Findlay) is vocally sound and imaginative as well. Catherine McCord's Gertrude and, particularly, Glenville Hargreaves's Peter, make their mark vocally if not dramatically.

Sheila Steafel's misguidedly comic Witch is, as she says "harmless as a baby chid". Decrepit and batty, it is difficult to know whether it is her inefficiency or that of the staging that keeps her and her broomstick as earthbound as the entire production.

Hilary Finch

about Dufy

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THE TIMES

DIARY

No trouble brewing

It is disappointing to learn that the England cricketers will not have to confess to hopeless alcohol addiction to obtain a foreigners' drinking permit when they visit the Islamic state of Pakistan in the New Year. "That's rubbish," the inappropriately named spokesman for the Test and County Cricket Board, Peter Lush said.

In fact the lads are in for something of a treat. A man whose judgement in such matters can be relied on, told me: "Murree beer is a rather strong, and very tasty, lager. The Pakistanis grew it in Murree, North-West Frontier Province, officially for export and for sale in tourist hotels. You can also buy it illegally, in places which also give you green cardamon to take the smell off your breath."

Vat VIIX

The same traveller swears that there is a brand of South American whisky which boasts on the label "Brewed in the cellars of Buckingham Palace by George VI himself".

Is the Woodcock Club the most exclusive in sport? To become a member, you must not only gun down two of these whirling game birds and a right, but must also have two independent witnesses to the miracle. New members used to get a free bottle of cherry brandy after their first double stalling, but the liquor company stopped that little number earlier in the year.

Tacked swiftly

There are about a dozen new rugby books in the shops at present, all the fruits of the usual protracted agonies. It takes a man like Andy Ripley to write a book in one afternoon. Ripley, that genial and eccentric telegraph pole, the Rosslyn Park and former England No. 8, wrote his book after lunch on a Thursday recently. It is full of his likes and dislikes, scraps of poetry and thoughts about the game.

Big Andy is cheerily convinced it will never be published. Our rugby correspondent, David Hands, liked it, and said it was like *A Spaniard in the Works*, a book by a non-rugby player called John Lennon. "Is not as good as that," said Ripley.

Heresy

In India, the three great concerns of life are politics, religion and cricket. The boundaries between them have never been clearly defined. After India's debacle in the fifth Test against the West Indies at Calcutta, the matter was raised in Parliament, with Suresh Kalmadi calling for the resignation of Mr N. K. P. Salve as president of the Indian cricket board of control. Mr Salve, who is also Minister of State for Steel and Mines, has clearly been getting his priorities wrong.



Barry Fantoni

Doc and Cop

Managers: I am afraid that associating Tommy Docherty with a vacant managerial job is hardly front page stuff. Still, the current speculation linking him with the vacancy at Stoke has the redeeming novelty of placing Steve Coppell as his number 2. Needless to say, perhaps, Coppell himself had not heard a thing about it all, but he thought it was a jolly good idea anyway.

Docherty, brash motivator, and Coppell, thoughtful graduate, have always got on well. Coppell wonders if their chalk and cheese natures might not be more like nitric acid and glycerine in partnership. So he'd like to work with the Doc in double harness? "I don't think anyone has ever managed to put Tommy Docherty in a harness."

Quote of the week: "It is strange, but I guess I could earn more money in amateur athletics than I do in professional football." Renato Nehemiah, wide receiver for San Francisco 49ers, and world record holder for high hurdles, banned from amateur athletics because of his "professionalism".

More managers: Final proof of the supremacy of the cult of manager comes in *Match* magazine. I spent much of my childhood scoring goals against the garage door when I was Roy of the Revers, but *Match*'s hero, Harry Cannon, is "boss of once great Stanton Town whose attempts to clear his name following the disgrace of a bribe scandal have touched a raw nerve with the underworld".

"On Lord," said Cannon, at the end of the last episode. "This whole damnable business has turned me into a murderer."

All grand stuff, but do the kids who read it spend their days sitting in imaginary dog-outs, shouting, pointing and chewing gum?

Footnote: "There is no crisis at Arsenal," Tommy Caton.

Simon Barnes

The Horse-traders' Handicap

by Julian Haviland

The struggle for the chairmanship of the Select Committee on Defence has entertained spectators at Westminster this week and some of the participants - cheerfully mopping their bleeding noses yesterday - enjoyed it too.

But beneath the rivalries a serious question was asked and the answer given will not help Parliament's reputation. It is that backbench members are powerless to fill even important backbench posts with candidates of their choice if the Government is determined to prevent them.

On Thursday the Prime Minister, through the exertions of the Government Chief Whip Mr John Wakeham, succeeded in imposing on the Defence Committee, against the will of the majority of its members, the chairman of her choice, Sir Humphrey Atkins.

As a former Northern Ireland Secretary, in daily contact for two and a half years with senior figures in the armed services, Sir Humphrey has been more closely concerned with defence matters than his critics have allowed. He may prove more expert and less compliant than they expect.

But Mrs Thatcher, who had to deploy all her powers of patronage to put Sir Humphrey in place, did not do so to strengthen a committee which may well ask awkward questions when the Treasury next

raids the defence budget or when the costs of the Trident programme start to swell.

The new departmental select committees were created by the last Parliament as a shining weapon for MPs to use to prod ministers and Whitehall. But they expired at the election and there was a six-month delay before they were reconstituted this week.

There are signs that ministers and those who advise them think that the best time to hobble the committees is at the outset, by interfering with the choosing of members by the nominally independent Committee of Selection. Even then, an all-party committee may learn to embarrass ministers if a strong chairman, respected by all members, can make a team of them. So, better to fix the chairmanship too.

This time the fixing took some doing. At first the Committee of Selection, striving to meet its obligations to reflect the balance of parties in the House, nominated seven Conservatives and four Opposition MPs. Atkins was nobody's first choice. Two other Conservatives, Michael Mates and Michael Marshall, had backing in the Conservative group. Marshall was preferred by the three Labour men and the Social Democrat, who agreed to vote together.

The Opposition Chief Whip, Michael Cox, told that Atkins was

the Downing Street favourite, tried to induce the Labour men to vote for him, but had dusty answers. Cox, exercising his own patronage, had his own candidates for the chairs of other select committees which, by agreement with Wakeham, were to go to Labour. But if he and his side let Wakeham down, the deal will be off.

Wakeham was active on another front. He sent an emissary to James Molyneux, leader of the Official Ulster Unionists, who was aggrieved that his party had no member on any committee. An understanding was reached that Conservative votes would be used to take the Social Democrat, John Curran, off the committee and put on the Ulster Unionist, Ken Maginnis, instead.

Maginnis does not admire Atkins but was expected to learn to do so quite quickly. These precautions proved unnecessary. The Conservatives solved their own problem in the end, and outsiders did not count. They decided to reach agreement inside the party caucus and, once *The Times* had revealed the goings-on, this course became imperative. From that moment Atkins could not lose. The squabble was to be kept in the family, and in the Conservative family, what mother says still counts.

But it was hard pounding. The four Tory Indians met to choose one of their three would-be chiefs. Two were for Atkins; one each for Mates

and Marshall. Leaving Atkins aside, they tried again and split 2-2. The loss of a coin between Mates and Marshall was suggested but rejected. It was the only way Atkins could have been stopped. Mates and Marshall would neither drop out for Atkins nor join forces against him.

Late on Thursday night the whips worked again on Marshall and Mates in turn. They were pitted with whisky and urged not to rock the boat. There was a promise that Atkins would go to the House of Lords as soon as the Prime Minister thought it safe to hold a by-election in his Spelthorne seat.

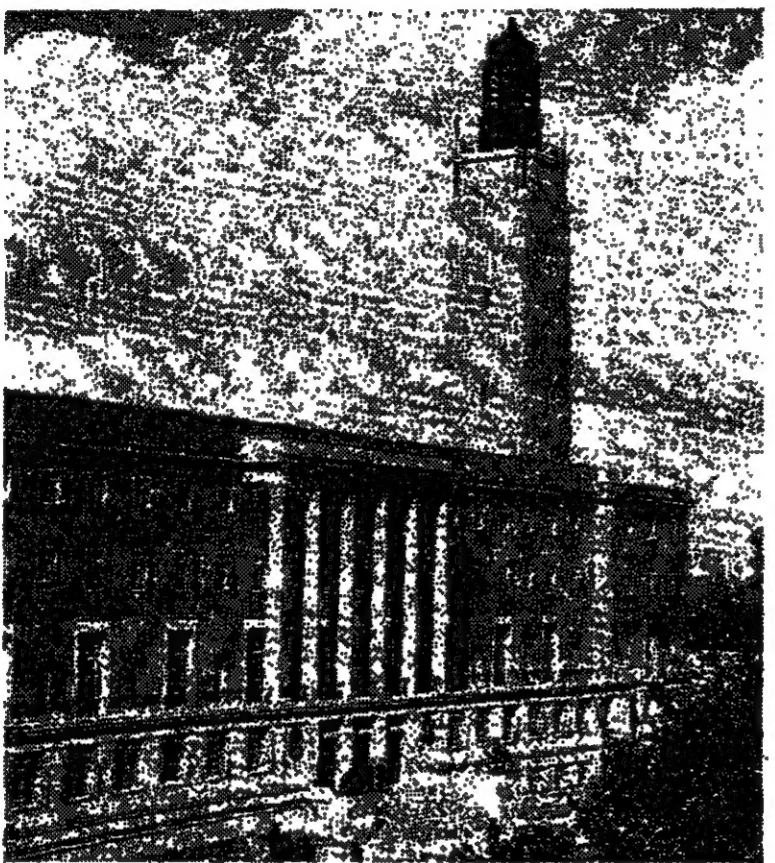
On Friday night all seven Conservatives were called to Wakeham's room and at last he prevailed, but on certain terms. Atkins would be chairman, but he promised to stand down after 18 months. Wakeham in turn had to promise that the next chairman will be chosen from the existing committee members, so that no new place was found from outside.

The Conservative Establishment, though as it has proved, has not won the whole game. The Prime Minister's plan is that Atkins should also have a more senior post, the chairmanship of the Liaison Committee, which controls the Budget of the select committee and decides which estimates are debated in Parliament.

The author is Political Editor of *The Times*

Demolishing the Thirties myth

Sir John Summerson, curator of John Soane's Museum, looks in vain for fine Thirties architecture



Norwich City Hall: the best of an era?

Now that I come to look calmly at the architecture of the 1930s, how does the decade strike me? I am sorry to say that it strikes me very much as it did then, and at the Thirties Exhibition at the Hayward Gallery a few years ago; as a decade lacking in vigour of invention or refinement of style.

Indeed it had no style. The Gothic of Scott and Classic of Lutyens and Curtis Green had their roots in the world of pre-1914. Perhaps the decorative, quasi-modern style of Oliver Hill is as near as you get to anything coherently and intrinsically "Thirties".

Was there, among all the competitions for town halls, fire stations and other institutional paraphernalia one which can bear comparison with the competition winners of late Victorian and Edwardian days - Colcutt, Brydon, Aston Webb? I doubt it. Perhaps Norwich City Hall is an exception, or the RIBA building, I would hate to lose either of them, but they have that Scandinavian anaemia which disqualifies them from the front rank.

What was wrong with the Thirties? It was a period of transition, and was very self-conscious about this fact. "We live in an age of transition" was a recurrent cliché of after-dinner speeches. The clever answer to this was, of course, that all ages are ages of transition.

Two buildings come to mind which have lately attracted much attention, and which expose the schizophrenic fissions of the Thirties: Battersea Power Station and the Firestone factory. The power station is an engineering structure of some nobility, which has been artistically modelled by a cathedral architect. The factory is a commonplace industrial building tacked on to an

Art Deco paraphrase of Burnet's British Museum.

The first is a case of misapplied skill - the wrong skill. The second is a case of monumental architecture cynically deployed, skin deep, as an eye-catcher. Nobody in the Thirties would ever have believed that a later (but not very much later) generation would wish to preserve such muddle and mediocrity.

To me it is a great puzzle why people do want to preserve buildings such as these. There is evidently something about them which appeals deeply. Is it the very grime of their Thirties humour? Do they bring out, as it were in caricature, the contradictions and neuroses of the time? Is the fascination they

exercise a sort of voyeurism? I think that must be the answer, and I do not know what to make of it.

I would not shed a tear for Battersea Power Station. I suppose it is a fine brick mass, but those four belching chimneys at the four corners, pulling it apart, as it were, are to me really painful. Archer tried this game at St John's in Smith Square. It didn't work, and the church came to be called Queen Anne's footstool. It works even less at Battersea - Gavin Stamp's billiard table.

I suppose this may be dismissed as a "subjective judgement". As a product of its time - at no other time could such a thing possibly have been erected, Battersea Power

Station is, of course, interesting. So, for that matter, are the Firestone factory and the Granada Cinema at Tooting. I despised them all when I was on the *Architect and Building News*, but I can't deny that they represent significant facets of the Thirties world.

If to bring lost worlds into focus is the purpose of preservation, then to preserve these things is perhaps right. If it is to preserve funny old things just for the hell of it, and for the entertainment of all and sundry, there is perhaps an even more complete logical justification. The test is: "Are they funny enough?" (another case of "subjective judgement").

The detachment of a decade for special adulation is a curious modern habit which started, I suppose, with Holbrook Jackson's book of 1913 on the 1890s. The nineties really had got something, not only Wilde, Max Beerbaum, the Beggars' brothers, Beardsley and the Yellow Book, they had the young Lutyens and C. R. Mackintosh. In other fields, of course, the Thirties had Moore, Nicholson, Hepworth, Auden, Betjeman. But in architecture, who? The question is embarrassing.

I wrote an introduction for Trevor Dannatt's *Modern Architecture in Britain*, published in 1959. The first sentence reads: "It seems natural, writing about the past 30 years of English architecture, to write as if the only things worth bothering about were the local initiatives, progress and achievements of the 'modern movement'."

Look at the pictures in Dannatt's book - all those concrete and glass rectangles assembled, divided and subdivided, recessed and modulated, with more invention and variety than you would think possible - they do constitute a rather monumental performance. The pent-up energies of the war years were released and the Fifities were the decade of the British modern: something really revived. Now it is in the shadows, but one of these days a Fifities Society will be called for.

A shortened version of a lecture given to the Thirties Society this week.

Bernard Levin: the way we live now

Once upon a time it was the artist who suffered - now it's us

If Anton Webern were alive today (which thank the Lord he's not, sir) he would be 100; set off by the century, his music has been raging through Europe like influenza, and many of the victims have developed hideous secondary symptoms in the form of Berg, Schoenberg and even Varese. Prognosis in most cases is grave, and where Boulez and Schoenberg have set in, little hope can remain: at the Barbican on Tuesday, for instance, the Vienna Philharmonic under Mehta were unable to fill the hall, despite the fact that the second half of the concert consisted of the Schubert C major Symphony (a marvellously sonorous and exciting performance, incidentally), because the first half was devoted entirely to Webern. (The one thing that can be said in favour of Webern is that his works are mercifully short; each of the *Five Orchestral Pieces*, for instance, consists of not much more than three plinks and a plonk, and even the *Six Orchestral Pieces*, which figured in Tuesday's programme and are massive structures by comparison, were all over in less than 10 minutes the lot, with an average for each item of five plinks, two plonks and a grrrrr.)

We can, I think, safely take it that no man in his senses wants to listen to this stuff or enjoys it when he does so; some think they ought to listen to it, but even the writer of Tuesday's programme-notes ("... shook off the last trappings of tonality... skeletal thematicism... revolutionary compression... steadily accelerating to a catastrophic disintegration... made it sound as though the First Principle of Medicine - the nastier it tastes the more good it is doing you - was being applied. So what was it doing up front in the concert, making us wait three-quarters of an hour for Schubert?")

Mark, I do not suggest that Webern was a charlatan, let alone that Schoenberg and Berg were; indeed, I do not think that even Stockhausen is having us on. They make these horrible noises because they feel like it, not to impress Mr Hans Keller, and it is no more an answer to say that the hall would

have been entirely empty without the Schubert in the bill than it is an equal and opposite answer to say that Berio must be a genius because at the first performance of Beethoven's Third Symphony somebody in the audience shouted "I'd give another Krugger if the thing would stop". This subject is a minefield sown with undistributed middle, and great care must be taken while travelling through it.

All the same, these people do make horrible noises, and nobody enjoys listening to them. What has happened?

First, steadily growing throughout our era, is the belief that art is not something to be enjoyed, but something through which we are to suffer. But that is not true. Certainly tastes differ, and the fact that I would not give fourpence a square yard for the entire works of Francis Bacon does not affect his prices; all the same, I have never seen, in any gallery showing his pictures, any expression on the faces of those looking at them other than revulsion and rejection, and neither have you.

The defenders of the Sacher-Masoch Theory of Art will say that we live in an ugly world, full of moral and political dissonance and distortion, and that it is the artist's duty to reflect that world; whence not only the nasty noises, the hideous paintings and the New Vithilism of the "committed" playwrights, but also such lunacy as action painting and aleatoric music. What these people forget is that the world has always been ugly, cruel and capricious; yet only in very recent times has art begun to imitate that those qualities were the most significant; and that art must take on their nature.

Why is random art - paint flung from radio atmospheric, novels published loose-leafed - to be shuffed before reading - such nonsense? Do you suppose that Shakespeare didn't know that the world could fly apart at any moment, and that the Wars of the Roses had ended only 80 years before he was born? Do you imagine that Rembrandt, because he lived in Holland, had never heard of the Massacre of St Bartholomew, only 34 years before he was born? Do you think that Bach would have enjoyed himself if Charles XII had come to tea? Do you believe that Dostoevsky thought life was a bowl of cherries? Of course such artists knew that they had to assimilate suffering and refine it into their art, that they had to face ugliness before they could conceive beauty, that the ice of the world is eternally thin, and will always crack and groan and roar in travail as the artist tiptoes his way across it.

But that is why art is centripetal, and the artist's duty to keep it so. Art is the incantation that binds humankind, truth and beauty together, and it is able to serve that purpose because, and only because, it can keep simultaneously in view the lesser truth that the world can fall to pieces at any moment and the greater truth that it will not.

The ugliness, and - much more significant - the triviality, of so much of modern art is a reflection of the fact that so many artists have ceased to be capable of that dual vision, and that some deny that the duality exists at all, or even maintain that the only truth about the universe is that it is charged and primed with disintegration. (What was it that led to the present danger of nuclear annihilation if not the

splitting of the atom, that ultimate, hideous, unforgivable impiety of putting asunder that which God had joined together?)

This is the mistake of the false prophets, who strive ceaselessly (but, happily, in vain) to lead the common people astray. I am myself one of the common people, and it is on their behalf and at their unanimous request that I am speaking today, just as on Tuesday night acted as their representative when, listening to the Webern, I made a face as of one who has just swallowed a quince, and waited patiently until Schubert arrived with his great hymn to wholeness - a wholeness so complete that it can even encompass fragmentation, just as the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven is a hymn to the light so overwhelming that it even contains darkness.

Atomality was the great barrier reef on which modern music shattered, as the stream-of-consciousness was the torpedo that sank the novel and abstraction the anaesthetic that put painting to sleep. But these things are not just techniques: they are a direct consequence of the sickness in the artist's soul, a sickness which denies the duty which he previously shouldered unconsciously from Gioito to Picasso, from Monteverdi to Britten, from Rabelais (or Homer if you like) to Thomas Mann, from Aeschylus to Chekhov. All life, and therefore all art, strives towards harmony. Why does a playwright like Stoppard, a novelist like Nabokov, a painter like Matisse, stand out so tremendously today? Because artists like these do know the artist's duty to face the void without flinching, to declare that the world will yet be saved, and to weave their single strand of the great rope made of form and meaning equally - that holds the universe together. And I know this: another century hence, no one will think of celebrating Webern's bicentenary, because he will be utterly forgotten. But the C major Symphony of Schubert will still be as fresh, as glorious, and as true as ever.

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David Hewson

Should we then ban News at Ten?

Parliament rarely looks its best when duty demands that it dictate what people see and hear. In evidence, I submit the following exchange, from the third sitting of the Standing Committee C on the Video Recordings Bill:

Mr Graham Bright (Luton, South): "There would be considerable scope for argument as to how far that [an amendment which would replace 'animal' with 'sentient being'] would extend down the animal kingdom, and even whether it would extend to plant life. I am advised, for example, that an amoeba might be considered to be sentient on the grounds that it would move away from noxious chemicals... Similarly, I am told that a plant will respond to the force of gravity: if it is turned upside down, the stem and roots will start to grow in the opposite direction."

Mr Robert McClelland (Caitness and Sutherland): "Will the hon. gentleman explain why he thinks that exposure to the force of gravity could possibly be described as 'mutilation, torture or other acts of gross violence'?"

Mr Bright: "There is an element of force that is unnatural if one turns a plant upside down."

And elsewhere:

Mr McLennan: "The second purpose of the amendment is to make it clear beyond doubt... that the exclusion is not intended to apply to violent acts of nature whose victims are not sentient beings. I shall cite two examples. I do not believe that a nature film showing the eruption of Mount St Helens, which is a violent act of nature, is the sort of thing that we wish to catch by the clause. The bulldozing of a high rise tower block may be described as an act of gross violence, but that is not likely to be caught by the clause. My amendment would preclude any doubt on that score."

Standing Committee C is not, so far as it can be ascertained, some elaborate joke being perpetrated by Mr Tom Stoppard, or a festive attempt at a Westminster pantomime.

Yet something very odd is clearly happening when a serious, and, in most quarters, welcome attempt to ban the video nasty suddenly turns into a debate on cruelty to amoebae and beastliness to plants. To gauge just how odd, let us consider some of the items which could be banned from videos on sale to the public if the Bill, as now drafted, becomes law.

There would be no "mutilation, torture or other acts of gross violence" between animals, consenting or otherwise. One presumes that this would not be communicated to the beas of bush and jungle, but only to the film-makers who would no longer be permitted to document their behaviour until Leo turned vegetarian. While it would still be legal to hunt and kill a fox, the criminal law could be upon you were you to film the event and offer the result for sale to the general public. They could have watched the whole thing live, if you will pardon the expression, in the first place.

Naturally, if this discreet veil is to

be drawn over the cruelty of animals to one another, it will also be extended to homo sapiens. Attractive as this may seem, there are one or two problems. The most important is that, whatever Standing Committee C may decree, human beings undoubtedly are cruel to one another on a regular basis, as any news bulletin shows.

On the present basis, anyone could be open to prosecution for taping a suitable edition of the television news, the content of which is controlled under different regulations, and then offering it for sale as a home video. ITN's video about the Falklands campaign, which depicts some horrifying wounds, might attract criminal prosecution for containing the very material which has been shown on peaktime television to millions.

Once one steps from fact to fiction, the banned list grows ever longer. What, for instance, would one make of the blinding of Gloucester or Oedipus? Who would ever again be allowed to dramatise our best example of "mutilation, torture or other acts of gross violence", enacted on Good Friday?

This may not be the intention of most of those concerned with the Bill, but intentions do not always mesh with marks. One of the great failings of a legislative approach to deciding what is aesthetically good or bad is that it depends on the notion that such judgments can be made with the certainty of, say, charting the ocean.

As Mr Matthew Parris MP has pointed out to the committee: "If we were to try to remove from literature those things which might have a bad effect on immature and maladjusted adults, who knows where that might end? Many British people have seen bull fighting, and that is the main reason why it is so greatly disliked... the turning of the tide of American public opinion on the Vietnam war was when newsreel pictures were shown of little Vietnamese children running away from American soldiers with their backs on fire because of napalm. Showing people things can make them change their minds about them, not make them want to copy them."

"I do not say that people should be shown everything; there are some things which they should not see. But the committee should remember that merely because something is unpleasant and we do not believe it should happen is not sufficient reason for thinking it should not appear on video."

Or on television or the cinema screen, for that matter, for those are surely the next targets if a new and more restrictive code can find its way into the private home. A law to ban genuine video nasties will command popular support. One which attempts to define good taste, morally as well as legally, will fail. It may be an uncomfortable truth but the acceptable can only be defined in reverse; the unacceptable needs to exist and, on occasion, proclaim its existence to enable us to draw the line.

Roy Strong

The taste that begins with laying the table

Christmas is one of those occasions when even the most run-of-the-mill households pause and attempt to essay one of the arts of living, table-laying. Recently Lady Clark told me how, when she was busy in the kitchen preparing lunch, her husband would go out into the garden in search of the "bouquet" for the table. "Please remember not to pick those two irises," she would ask, but he always did, reflecting exactly his appreciation of the aesthetic of the table.

There is a marvellous museum in Stockholm which exhibits the history of table-laying. Down a darkened corridor the visitor goes past rooms, after room laid in period style, one a ladies' dinner held in a bedroom by a roaring fire, as in the engraving by Ambramson Bosse, another evoking the naughtiness of the ancient regime with Sevres porcelain arranged for a meal à deux at a table whose cloth trails to the ground, knotted at the corners. What art the consumption of food has evoked - but one of these days a Fifities Society will be called for.

Atonality was the great barrier reef on which modern music shattered, as the stream-of-consciousness was the torpedo that sank the novel and abstraction the anaesthetic that put painting to sleep. But these things are not just techniques: they are a direct consequence of the sickness in the artist's soul, a sickness which denies the duty which he previously shouldered unconsciously from Gioito to Picasso, from Monteverdi to Britten, from Rabelais (or Homer if you like) to Thomas Mann, from Aeschylus to Chekhov. All life, and therefore all art, strives towards harmony. Why does a playwright like Stoppard, a novelist like Nabokov, a painter like Matisse, stand out so tremendously today? Because artists like these do know the artist's duty to face the void without flinching, to declare that the world will yet be saved, and to weave their single strand of the great rope made of form and meaning equally - that holds the universe together. And I know this: another century hence, no one will think of celebrating Webern's bicentenary, because he will be utterly forgotten. But the C major Symphony of Schubert will still be as fresh, as glorious, and as true as ever.

My recollections of memorable tables would form an eccentric list. It would not be particularly governed by splendour at all. It would include a humble lunch of cold meat and salad with Duncan Grant at Charleston. The painted wood table, the pottery, even the food was pure Omega workshops. John Piper's honest scrubbed wood table at Fawley matches it in another way, for from the centre arises a bank of white pottery candlesticks, all sorts and sizes, with cascades of dripping white wax.

Artists' tables are always interesting as they naturally approach them as a form of still life.

A state banquet at Buckingham Palace provides one of the last glimpses of table-laying in the grand manner. The menu lists the glorious porcelain from which the guests eat, and little cards reveal the antiquity of the vista of candelabra and epergnes that stretch in each direction. On that occasion cascades of *alchemilla mollis* reveal the delicate restraint of whoever orchestrated this spectacle. How different magnificence and complementarity to a luncheon by an American millionaire, where the museum accession numbers on the plates were noticeable. Nothing like eating off your tax concessions.

Eating is a wonderful vehicle for looking and not only at flowers and artifacts from the past. Modern ceramic sculpture produces delightful pieces to enliven a table. Bryan Newman's evocation of old London Bridge and John Gandy's garden wall topped by urns and pascocks have given me endless pleasure. One of the sad aspects of the dining table at 10 Downing Street is the total absence of any contemporary ceramics or silver. There, table-laying ought to be celebration of this country's past and present creativity.

The most memorable table I ever had to arrange was a luncheon party for the Queen Mother at Ham House. The table was placed as it would have been in Catherine of Braganza's bedroom, with the Royal Visitor sitting so that the garden's lines of perspective met in her eyes. I regret to say that a colleague's bed was despoiled of its lace counterpane, and statuettes of the seasons were ferried down from the V & A, for the occasion.

In contrast the most memorable visual surprise I ever had laid before me was by Lord Eccles, who had commissioned Vanessa Bell to decorate a dessert service with scenes from Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. He saw that I was served with the "Elizabethan lady", and my wife with "the man in the large black hat". Such is the stage-management of table-laying. It is above all an exercise in the art of looking, and a means whereby even the humblest meal is made unforgettable.

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REHABILITATE, NOT DECAPITATE

A glimpse has now been offered of the arguments Mr Patrick Jenkin is using privately to secure for his rate capping Bill, due out next week, a better parliamentary reception than it deserves. They are, to do him justice, the same arguments as he has used publicly, with the added admission that the Government's chopped and changed financial relationship with local authorities has arrived at a condition of impenetrable chaos. Something has to be done. The something proposed is a giant stride towards central direction. Never, it appears, has Whitehall known better.

Mr Jenkin's first argument is that Britain is a unitary state. Local authorities are the creatures of Parliament, enjoying a merely statutory existence. Therefore there is no objection in principle to the central dictation of the details of local expenditure and revenue raising. The premises are correct and the conclusion wrong.

This is a unitary state and councils are subordinate authorities, subject to statute. Parliament is fully entitled to do what it likes with them up to and including abolition. But it remains the case that to extinguish the discretion local authorities have historically possessed in determining their rate call and so varying their expenditure is to make a far-reaching change in the customary arrangements of government; and to that objec-

tion in principle may very well be taken.

Mr Jenkin's second argument is that government must be able to rely on the cooperation of local authorities in the realization of its economic and social objectives. If the cooperation is not forthcoming voluntarily it must be enforced. The proposition, broadly stated and subject to toleration of a reasonable amount of local variation, is incontestable. What is contested is the Government's claim that the "overspending" by councils, as Whitehall defines it, is actually putting major policy objectives at risk, when every penny of the extra expenditure is matched by extra yield from rates. The impediment to the execution of Government policies from that cause is not so great as to warrant a drastic diminution of the status of local government.

Mr Jenkin's third argument is that the proportion of rate income in the total income of local authorities, and the proportion of the sum paid in rates by domestic ratepayers in comparison with the sum paid by business and other non-voting ratepayers, and the proportion of domestic ratepayers who pay full rates in comparison with those who are subsidized or rebated, are all so low that the supposed financial accountability of councils to their electors is a nullity. He can point to the huge rate

increases imposed by runaway socialist councils in inner cities at a time of falling inflation. And it is convenient for Mr Jenkin, if not contrived, that the grant support juggling for the coming year pretty well guarantees that these same councils will remain true to form.

It is indeed scandalous that successive governments have allowed the financial and electoral framework of local government to deteriorate so far that in many places only the most tenuous local accountability remains. But whatever it is that drives Mr Jenkin to set about reform in the way he has, it is not conservative instinct. Local government needs putting back on its feet and he offers it the coup de grâce. Its electoral roots and financial base need patient and detailed reconstruction, and he offers substitution by Whitehall, swollen and windy by a mass of local intricacy that it is quite unfitted to digest.

When Parliament receives the measure it should grant a selective power of rate capping, provided the criteria are objectively defined; for things have got so bad that many ratepayers now have a right to that protection. It should refuse to grant general reserve powers if they are sought. There is no necessity for them. They are a lazy substitute for the rehabilitation of local government proper.

CAVEAT TALPA

The first impulse of journalists over the affair of the Ministry of Defence leak is of respect and fellow-feeling towards *The Guardian*. If the secret memorandum about the arrival of cruise missiles in Britain had fallen into our hands instead of theirs, we would have used the information therein. Disclosure of items of public interest, is the business of the press, subject to the overriding requirements of justice and national security. It is agreed that the latter was not directly threatened by the information in the leaked paper. If challenged to disclose the identity of the source of a confidential report, the instinct and usually the duty of a journalist is to say nothing and take the consequences, which may in the last resort include imprisonment for contempt. *The Guardian* clearly acted from the best of motives and from an exacting view of the duty of the media. But in the circumstances of this case, it seems to us that the decision (which proves to have been an expensive one) was mistaken.

The hearing was a test case for a clause in the Contempt of Court Act 1981 which gave statutory force to a longstanding convention that journalists should not normally be required to disclose their sources unwillingly. This convention had been overturned by the House of Lords in a case where British Steel had demanded that Granada TV should say who had

given it information, used in a broadcast, which cast a decidedly unflattering light on the company's management. Even when required to by the Lords, Granada rightly refused to expose its informant to dismissal and possible action for damages. BSC eventually dropped its demand. The new law took away the right of courts to require disclosure in such cases; only "the interests of justice or national security or... the prevention of disorder or crime" could justify an order to disclose.

The document itself let fall no secrets likely to be of assistance to enemies of the state, but its circulation within the Ministry was very restricted, and the leak implies that one of a small number of individuals with access to exceedingly sensitive material was prepared to commit a breach of trust. It was reasonable for the Appeal Court to find that this had significant implications for national security; that it was the threat of a threat.

The press thrives on notional breaches of trust by its informants, while regarding itself as bound to commit no breaches of trust against them. Many confidences pass every day between the press and people in business or government, and it is very much in the public interest that they should. Ministers are among the readiest to take advantage of these informal contacts, which depend on the maintenance of trust. But the

information received by *The Guardian* was in the distinct though growing category of material sent anonymously. The recipient's obligations towards an informant who does not trust him with his identity can hardly be of the same kind as those in a genuine confidential relationship. No explicit or implicit contract exists, and it is almost quixotic to act as if it did.

In the normal way, the recipient would not even be in a position to unmask his informant - if he is, it is only by his informant's oversight. But on this occasion the Ministry hopes that the leaked photocopy may reproduce marks identifying which original copy it was taken from. A photocopy of copyright information is technically the property of the copyright holder, and so the High Court felt obliged to order its return, unmutated, regardless of the terms of the 1981 Act. Surreptitious leakers will no doubt take account of the implications of this in future, and the flow of unsigned communications to Fleet Street is likely to be channelled into re-typed copies. The protection to confidential journalism embodied in the 1981 Act remains substantially unaffected. If it proves to be inadequate when tested, then the legitimate functions of the media, and the services that they can render to society, would be gravely impaired. But we can cross that bridge if we come to it. Meanwhile, let the mole beware.

CHARITABLE GIVING AND TAKING

New figures from the National Council for Voluntary Organizations show a noteworthy increase in the subventions from central government to voluntary and charitable bodies in the four years since Mrs Thatcher took office. Large sums are also paid by the Manpower Services Commission, the Housing Corporation and by local government, taken together, the state has come to underwrite a large proportion of the work of the voluntary sector. The dependence of ostensibly private social service on public benefaction invites closer inspection than the voluntary movement has yet received from either public or Parliament.

The rate of growth of grant-giving by certain ministries - Urban Programme grants from the Department of the Environment have increased in value by nearly 300 per cent in four years - has been too rapid to allow anything but the most cursory assessment of value for the public money spent. Some departments have favourites; money undoubtedly goes to charitable bodies with an avowedly political intent (such as the Child Poverty Action Group) and to organizations at cross-purposes with the government's social policy. Of course, such pluralism is a welcome index of political maturity; but there is also a case for pruning the ever-lengthening list of interest groups knocking, apparently successfully, on Whitehall doors.

More worrying is the fact that public money is dispersed not only to the worthy charities devoted to the care of the elderly, children, and the handi-

capped, but also to organizations (for example many housing associations, and most groups with that woeal word "community" in their titles) staffed by welfare state professionals who differ from their counterparts in the state's employ only in name and accountability. Grant-giving by "maximalist" Labour city councils has rocketed, creating a stage army fully unionized and militant "volunteers" catering to the fashionable whims of sex and race.

Meanwhile, the British give money gifts to charity on a scale far surpassing Continental Europeans or other Westerners, save only the Americans, who are more generous, individually and corporately. The British give time, too, to all manner of useful organizations, which include both the blessed ladies of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service and the - less tweedy perhaps - women who help run play groups in inner city areas; both the heroes of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and unknown numbers who give up a few hours to visit the elderly.

In this mixed economy of the voluntary sector, there is a considerable role for public money to prime pumps, get groups started, provide secretarial assistance, ensure continuity in a group's life. It would be naive to imagine voluntary action could ever be entirely private, however admirable are those examples, such as the hospice movement, of initiatives in social service completely independent of the state. There is, of course, an important distinction between grants of

public money and concessions by the state on tax revenue. Charities enjoy tax and rating privileges; givers get some relief.

Four years ago there was ambitious talk by ministers about the voluntary sector being stimulated in order to cover the withdrawal of the state from expensive areas of social service. In fact, the welfare state has, since, hardly shrunk. The hefty increase in state support for voluntary bodies has underpinned their taking on new, additional social work. All around, expectations have yet to be diminished. But the case for reform of the welfare state must rest on its own merits: to introduce the voluntary sector as some kind of safety net is to misunderstand its nature.

Inevitably, because it relies on individuals and their enthusiasms, voluntary social service is patchy, non-uniform; there is always an element of chance. Volunteers may do a good job caring for the elderly in one district; in another, Age Concern and similar groups find it difficult to mobilize. To rely on voluntary action to provide the basic social services would quickly present issues of unequal access and territorial injustice. It would also harm the very spirit of voluntarism, which is an expression of social solidarity, of time and money given freely, not at the behest of government policy. Voluntary groups that have been primed with tax-collected funds should escape neither the scrutiny of public accountants nor the oversight of ministers, but they should not become the creatures of government or municipal policies.

Accounting for the Commonwealth

From Professor Mike Faber

Sir, Others must also be wondering what induced you in your leader ("Called to account", December 2) to turn such heavy artillery of insinuation and innuendo against the Commonwealth Secretariat.

You claim that senior appointments "... owe little to competitive selection procedures which normally ensure that some meritorious element resides at the tip of a public service." The Secretary General and the two Deputy Secretaries General are in fact appointed directly by member governments - if necessary through a process of election.

The Deputy Secretary General (Economic) was nominated by the present British Government, having previously been HM representative to the UN organisations in Geneva. The Deputy Secretary General (Political) has recently been recalled by the President of Nigeria to become Foreign Minister. That hardly suggests lack of merit.

As to your idea that the post of secretary general is "a deftly protected" by its holder "through the exercise of judicious patronage" anybody familiar with the procedure by which a secretary general is (or is not) reappointed knows that it is ridiculous. The truth of the matter is that, while not every Commonwealth government approves of everything the present Secretary General says or does, all recognize that a large majority do approve of the general way he tackles the job and wish him to continue doing it.

You also assert that "there is no real evidence of proper accountability".

A 1981 review group - external to the secretariat - advised upon the secretariat's objectives and priorities for the 1980s. This was followed by a review, again external, of the secretariat's management structure and establishment. The recommendations went to and were approved by a meeting of senior Commonwealth officials.

For their financial management, both the secretariat (1983-84 Budget, £5.6m; British contribution, £1.4m) and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (1983-84 Budget, £19.9m; British contribution, £5.5m) are fully accountable to bodies which meet regularly and are composed of representatives appointed by Commonwealth governments. All accounts are audited by the UK Exchequer and Audit Department.

The secretariat is a bureaucracy certainly, albeit a small one, and doubtless no bureaucracy is perfect. Its staff, drawn from some thirty Commonwealth countries, seek no more than to be judged by their collective performance.

On that score, the "real evidence" is that member governments are generally well satisfied, and indeed recognize that the Commonwealth association is fortunate to be served by a number of men and women of outstanding talent and dedication. I am, etc.

MIKE FABER, Director, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, Sussex, December 7.

The consumer case

From the Chairman of the Electricity Consumers' Council

Sir, May I comment on Mr Alex Henney's statement about this council in his letter in today's *Times* (December 14)?

Mr Henney's account of our meetings would probably have been more accurate if he had been present for all of the discussions he refers to. He mentioned, for example, that the ECC (Electricity Consumers' Council) is declining to press the CEBG in a forthright manner for information to which it is legally entitled. In fact, Mr Henney left our meeting before the discussion on this question had been completed and even before the

Prosecution by stores

From Mr Donald Ellison

Sir, Ms Stern, writing (December 8) as Director of the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, unjustly dismisses as "simply nonsense" what must surely be a valid and important point made by Baroness Phillips (November 24), writing as Director of the Association for the Prevention of Theft in Shops.

Ms Stern's reasoning is quite as muddled as the shoppers who, according to her, "remove goods without a clear intention to steal". Such "muddled shoppers", says Ms Stern, must be distinguished from "deliberate shoplifters".

This raises the question, who is to make that distinction? At present, the task is entrusted to the courts. If they discharge that task properly they hear the relevant evidence and

CND's political bias

From Dr J. M. Lewis

Sir, Your leader (December 5) is mistaken in claiming that "at its conference last year CND decided not to advocate Britain's departure from Nato". CND is committed by its own constitution (section A) to the "unilateral abandonment of Britain of... nuclear alliances", and the only point at issue is one of tactics - namely, how prominently to proclaim this neutralist commitment at any given time.

At the November, 1982, CND conference militantly anti-Nato delegates succeeded in defeating a CND leadership attempt to water down a resolution calling for much greater emphasis on withdrawal from the Atlantic Alliance. With the general election looming, however, the CND leaders chose to ignore the conference decision and to sweep

Public relations in aid of Government

From Mr John Andrew

Sir, David Burnside's article on the Conservative Government's need for public relations (December 9) makes sombre reading except as preparation for Orwell's projection for 1984.

His argument is bleak in its simplicity: since truth is an attribute of statement, let the Government so control and unify its statements as to ensure that the views of individual ministers are suppressed in order that the media may be fed with centrally manipulated and homogenised "truths". Thus we move closer to the classic recipe for the total society.

It is cold comfort to learn that the author is public relations director to the Institute of Directors. I am, Sir, yours faithfully, JOHN ANDREW, 10 Elm Court, Emdon, Saffron Walden, Essex.

From the Chairman-elect of the Public Relations Consultants Association

Sir, Whilst not disagreeing with David Burnside's scepticism (feature, December 9) about the likely effectiveness of the latest Government moves to improve their public relations, frankly he only skirts the central problem indicated by his title "Call in the professionals".

This Government's declared policy of encouraging private enterprise, skills in the areas of state activity has made scarcely a dent on Whitehall's communications. In contrast to the pattern throughout

Western Europe, very few outsider PR consultancies are used for government work.

This is a deliberate act of policy by the Civil Service, based on an obscure Cabinet minute from the Wilson administration of the late 1960s. Its aim has been to propose, falsely in our opinion for the majority of cases, that state security calls for such sensitive work to be carried out exclusively from within.

The outcome would not be as sad if government PR people themselves had a wider knowledge of the outside commercial world. Again looking abroad, and especially to the United States, one sees much more career interchange between civil servant communicators and the private sector - two-way traffic to the benefit of all. Not so in Britain.

Resistance to all offers of outside help reached its absurd peak at the time of the Falklands campaign. Our chairman offered voluntary assistance and advice on presentation of the conflict by top people in the consultancies. The then head of the Central Office of Information refused it in the most blunt terms.

Subsequent House of Commons inquiry has shown how pathetic were key aspects of public communication during this campaign. If you exclude some of the top people in their profession, this is what you must expect.

Yours etc, DOUGLAS SMITH, Chairman-elect, Public Relations Consultants Association, 37 Cadogan Street, Sloane Square, SW3, December 12.

India and slavery

From Mr M. Dube

Sir, In an article entitled "Crisis time ahead for UN slavery group" by Caroline Moorehead (November 2) it has been alleged that India is among the countries "believed to be hostile to the Working Group on Slavery of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities"; that it has a dispute with that group and that it has worked in the UN Committee on Programme and Coordination to seek the disbandment of the group.

I am writing categorically to deny these allegations. India has consistently valued the role and existence of the working group. We do not accept false and distorted charges levelled against us in the working

group and seek every opportunity to state the correct facts. However, we have had no problems whatsoever with the working group itself.

In the Committee on Programme and Coordination (CPC) the Indian delegation neither criticised the working group nor proposed its disbandment. This is clearly borne out by the report of the CPC. On the contrary, in the fifth committee of the UN General Assembly the Indian delegation took the lead in successfully restoring the programme element for the working group.

Yours faithfully, M. DUBEY, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations Offices, 9 Rue du Valais, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland, December 6.

Peace in our time?

From Mr Graham Greene, CH

Sir, What short memories politicians have. Mr Heseltine says that it is because we retain our deterrent that "we have lived in peace for the longest period of contemporary history." Surely it is nearer the truth to say that the longest period of peace (even then only relative peace) was between 1918 and 1939, before there was any question of the deterrent.

Since 1945 - to name a few - there have been the Korean war, the French war in Vietnam, the American war in Vietnam, war in

Malaya, war in Kenya, war in Angola, war in Nigeria, war in Ethiopia, war in Nicaragua and El Salvador, war in Chad, war in Israel, war in Lebanon.

Surely it can be argued that without the nuclear deterrent, which has sometimes deterred the two great powers from intervening with sufficient strength to keep the peace, there would have been far fewer wars.

Yours truly, GRAHAM GREENE, 06600 Antibes, France, December 12.

The ECC has also been in the forefront of the argument that an increase in the price of electricity is not necessary at the present time. Pressing the consumer case on these issues is our prime concern.

However, in the case of our work on electricity prices, the industry also appears keen to resist pressures for a price increase at the present time. Getting on with the industry on this issue, would have meant stable electricity prices for a period of over two and a half years, had it not been for Government intervention.

Yours faithfully, MICHAEL BARNES, Chairman, Electricity Consumers' Council, Brook House, 27/6 Torrington Place, WC1, December 14.

do not want "to be ruled by Communists" but they certainly do not want the present situation in which your correspondent reports that up to 40,000 civilians have been killed by the security forces and by death squads in the past four years.

US Vice-President Bush is perhaps a more reliable observer and his comments, notably absent from Sir Alfred Sherman's letter, indicate that even the Reagan Government are not happy with the El Salvador Government's brand of democracy.

The virulent confrontation of every situation in the context that whoever is anti-communist must be good for the democracies is a particularly pernicious doctrine that even Mrs Thatcher appears unable to swallow.

Yours faithfully, JACK SHAPIRO, 100 Brim Hill, N2, December 12.

The actual breakdown is: (a) officers - five Labour Party (including one ex-Communist candidate) and one "Socialist Feminist"; (b) ordinary members of national council - four Communist Party (including a leading member of the British-Soviet Friendship Society); nine Labour Party (including two defeated left-wing MPs); one left-wing "socialist"; and six whose affiliations are unclear.

The differences between this accurate analysis and the "witch hunt" it will undoubtedly be denounced as is that witches were non-existent entities whereas leftist activists in key "peace" movement positions are regrettably all too real.

Yours faithfully, JULIAN LEWIS, Research Director, The Coalition for Peace through Security, 27/31 Whitehall, SW1, December 5.

Disposal of rail archive

From Dr P. W. Lewis

Sir, What principles determine the continuing disposal of our national railway archive by British Railways Board (BRB)?

Despite the recent excellent publication of *The Railway Heritage of Britain*, which might be taken to indicate that the board has changed its attitude since the regrettable sale of material from Euston in 1969, a recent internal advertisement for someone to supervise the "correct and profitable disposal" of the board's extensive collection of material at Paddington, which includes a collection of original Brunel drawings, makes me suspect that there has been no such change.

If items by Brunel can be disposed of in such a cavalier fashion there seems little chance that the more mundane material will be treated with a proper respect for its archival value.

It is time the following questions were met publicly. Does BRB have any coherent policy for the disposal of its railway archive? Does BRB have any policy for the maintenance and conservation of the railway record that remains in its care? What control is exercised over those parts of the railway record, such as the glass negatives from Paddington, which have already become the responsibility of outside bodies?

Can BRB assure us that it intends to establish a working party, including competent outside experts, to advise on all items in an impartial and informed way before any decision is made to dispose of or destroy historical documents? Yours faithfully, P. W. LEWIS, Birkbeck College, University of London, Department of Geography, 7-15 Gresse Street, W1.

Irish unity

From Mr John D. Taylor, MEP for Northern Ireland (Ulster Unionist) and MP for Strangford (Official Unionist)

Sir, I was more than surprised to read the heading, "European MP calls for Irish unity", to your reference on December 13 to the Haagerup report on Northern Ireland to the European Parliament. In fact, Mr Niels Haagerup, Danish MEP, dismissed Irish unity as being an impossibility as far as he could see into the future.

He stated that the support for Irish unity by Dublin political parties was also fading, that Irish unity would present massive economic burdens which neither the EEC nor the USA would be prepared to finance, and that Irish unity would create a civil war situation which would require a major security operation, and that it was unrealistic for Dublin to expect that the EEC, USA or the UN would provide the necessary peace-keeping force.

No, Mr Haagerup did not recommend a united Ireland - instead he supported the more realistic approach of an agreed devolved government and administration for Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom. Whilst the exact structure for devolution is still not agreed, nonetheless three of Ulster's four main political parties already concur with Mr Haagerup's independent conclusion that devolution is the best way forward.

Let us hope that Dublin will now influence the fourth party, the SDLP, in favour of an internal settlement within Northern Ireland, as Mr Haagerup recommends. Yours faithfully, JOHN D. TAYLOR, House of Commons, December 13.

Blaming the computer

From Mr B. H. Parker

Sir, What is it about computers that encourages people to make irrational statements about them? Your headline, "Computer error blamed in Korean jet disaster" (December 9), is an example. The underlying text reported that the unfortunate pilots probably inserted wrong data into their navigational computer.

You call this a computer error. By the same token, midshipmen at this college who make a hash of coming alongside will be able to report "rudder failure" and those who put themselves on the mud can blame "chart error".

Yours etc, BRIAN PARKER, Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, Devon, December 10.

Uneminent and trivial

From Mr Kingsley Amis

Sir, Well, if you print a whole article where somebody complains about something somebody else might have said on a television programme, you will have to put up with a corrective letter on the matter.

My objection to Philip Oakes's autobiography (feature, December 10) was and is not merely that he is not eminent. It was and is that he is not eminent and also has nothing to tell us that is not trivial and dull.

Many people enjoy trivia about the famous or infamous, Sir Winston Churchill's waistcoat, Hitler's favourite lunch. And many, too, want to be told about the remarkable adventures, heroic, comic or scandalous, of otherwise remarkable and uneminent persons. But when an uneminent man like Oakes writes a book about things like the dance he perhaps went to in 1949, forgive me if I prefer to chat to my minicab driver.

Yours faithfully, KINGSLEY AMIS, c/o Jonathan Clowes Ltd, 62 Prince Albert Road, NW1, December 12.

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17-23 DECEMBER 1983 A WEEKLY GUIDE TO LEISURE, ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ARTS

Tripping the night fantastic



Photographs by Laurie Sporn

Who cares about the depression? Not the hedonistic youngsters who are flocking to the new kind of big city nightclubs. Max Bell

Swinging London is back. The opening last month of the Hippodrome, a £3m pleasure palace, and the seasonal exigencies have reinforced the belief that the recession can be forgotten. There is a new desire to see and be seen in the brash and expensive hedonistic havens of the city's night life. The New Romantic movement, which has now been assimilated into high fashion, is one reason for the recent proliferation of clubs. The modern obsession with style and individual dress has generated the need for new places where people can congregate and study each other. This desire to parade finds many parallels with the 1920s when an economic slump was offset by a hellbent determination to step out and shine, to ad-lib. The club scene flourished in the 1960s, but then the music was paramount and tastes were more orthodox. Now they are far more heterogeneous. There is a club to suit every preference: from African to 1940s jump and jive, from smart punk to leather fetishism. Similarly, while the record charts now form the domain of the new breed of teenyboppers, older teenagers and young adults feel less inclined to take it all too seriously. The arrival of the American-style cocktail bar has given British youth the ideal environment in which to celebrate its new-found sense of style and ready money. Live music halls or pubs seem dreary by comparison and today's youth has no intention of adhering to former Prime Minister James Callaghan's injunction to be in bed by 11 o'clock. The clubs, with their late licensing hours, are the natural places in which to flout the depression.

"To be an Englishman is to belong to the most exclusive club there is", wrote Ogden Nash. The Camden Palace in London NW1 may not be the most exclusive club in the world, but it has been voted the best in Europe by those who know, and the proof lies in the thousands of addicts of London night life who pass through its

heavily guarded doors six nights a week. They come to Slum It In Style on Tuesdays or luxuriate in Helden on Thursdays. For a few hours metropolitan youth can assume an heroic status, rub shoulders with the stars and indulge in a glittering, noisy fantasy.

The Palace is impressive. Formerly the prosaic Music Machine, it was converted for £1m by Messrs Fredericks and Henry, two Coventry businessmen. They added lasers, a barrage of lights, the throbbing dance floor and the inflated circus figures that hang from the ceiling. The effect is futuristic meets art deco. They also added Steve Strange and his partner Rusty Egan. Strange is London's most notorious socialite, a Welsh emigrant, aged 24, who presides as Palace host, entertaining his florid guests in the cocktail bar like a New Wave Beau Brummell or John Wilkes. He and Egan anticipated the 1980s club boom with a succession of smaller ventures, Billies, Club for Heroes, Hell and Blitz, watering holes for the New Romantic movement which spawned the designers Sue Clowes and Stephen Linard and pop stars Spandau Ballet and Boy George.

It has been said that once a trend is identified it is over, but the Palace seems to be doing well. At a recent Helden the place was packed for the visit of Divine, an outrageous New York transvestite. On the fourth tier of this vast edifice Bob Bates, the Doncaster-born bar manager, nods good evening to one of the visions of beauty that flock here. This is Dave, aged 19, from Birmingham, his hair arranged like a Spanish galleon under full sail. In his stilettoed wake - "Puppies, mate" - come four more of Ziggy Stardust's children, the glamour kings, David Singh, Trojan, Leigh Bowery and Peter Hammond. Their five-inch platform boots, luxuriant tights, pancake make-up and plaits draw the immediate interest of an Italian film crew, here like everyone else to participate in the clubland phenomenon.

Strange holds forth at the bar. It is well past midnight but the place is not yet full: anyone who is anyone arrives late and stays until 3am. An evening at the Palace can be expensive. Admission is £4 and it is not much fun nursing one's liver all night. It is, after all, extremely hot. Strange knows that the poorer visitors smuggle in drink, but he still wonders where on earth they get the money from.

Patsy and Delia, both aged 18, arrive at 10pm and intend to stay until the end. They like the pina colada cocktails and will spend about £30 each before taking a taxi all the way home to Biggin Hill in Kent. "People are fed up with being depressed", Strange says. "These kids have got the latest clothes. I don't know how they manage."

In common with the more upmarket clubs the Palace operates a door policy which Strange defines as an attitude. "If people are polite, fine, but if eight guys arrive together that spells trouble." Six tube stops away Peter Stringfellow, the flamboyant 43-year-old proprietor of the Hippodrome, on the old Talk of the Town site just off Leicester Square, sits back and fingers his £800 suede suit with glee. After 20 years of working in and running nightclubs Stringfellow can claim: "I am the best single club owner in Britain. I may look like a rock 'n' roll dropout but I am financially sound. The Hippodrome is all mine, bought with pound notes, cash. He spent more than 50,000 of them on the club's opening party.

Sharp as a razor blade and son of a steel worker, Stringfellow started his club life in the early 1960s booking the Beatles for £85 at the Black Cat before running the notorious Mojo mod club in Sheffield. He moved into discos with Candelas and Rockefellas in Leeds, sold these to Mecca and then sank his savings into the Millionaire in Manchester. "I sold that to Granada for a tidy profit and arrived in the West End. I wouldn't be anywhere else. The West End is glamour, it's frivolous but it's entertainment."

While Strange at the Palace had been guardedly polite about the Hippodrome as competition, Stringfellow was less charitable about the Palace. "I like the place and I'd like some of their bizarre clientele, but Camden is so provincial it's just like Scunthorpe. I wouldn't have paid three million for a place two streets from here."

He also adopts a door policy: "No coach parties from Wigan or scruffs", and one gets the feeling that Christmas office outings would not be over-welcome either. Admission on Friday is £7.50, cocktails are twice Palace prices, a bottle of Dom Perignon will set you back £35. Who pays these prices, I wondered?

Happiness at the Hippodrome: Late-night revellers include the 'Gruesome Threesome', Guardsmen Tony, Merv and Mal (top)

They'd tried the Beat Route and Gossips and the Empire but wouldn't go to the Palace. Not their scene. Tracey wasn't sure if this was her scene either and Pete was shocked at the admission price, but if it had been £20 he would have paid. Too embarrassing not to and anyway the club was exclusive, they didn't let in any riff-raff. This was flash, with those lasers. And those sofas! You sank back a foot in them! Seen the lavatories! Hair spray, cologne, the lot! What an experience! Out of this world! It struck me that the Hippodrome was deliberately ostentatious, an extension of its owner's ego, like his other club Stringfellow's. On the hydraulic dance floor the Hot Gossip dance troupe went through their sexy routine while a DJ jollied the hordes along like a holiday camp redcoat. Around the club



Clubmen: Hosts Peter Stringfellow (left) and Steve Strange

THE HIPPODROME, corner of Charing Cross Road and Cranbourn Street, London WC2 (437 4311) Doors open 9pm-3am. Licensed until 2am. Food in the Balcory Restaurant, approximately £10 a head. House wine £5, champagne from £18, cocktails £3.50-£5, lager £1.25 a glass, spirits with mixers from £1.65. Club entry £5-£7.50. Live music, disco, personal appearances, videos.

CAMDEN PALACE, 1a Camden High Street, London NW1 (387 0428) Doors open 9pm-3am. Licensed until 2am (New Year's Eve 3am). Food in the Gallery Restaurant, minimum charge £4 a person. Wine from £4.75. Club entry £3-£4. Lager £1.20, cocktails from £2.50. Live music, disco, personal appearances, videos.

HEAVEN (including Cellar Bar), The Arches, Villiers Street, London WC2 (839 3852) Doors open 10pm-3am. Licensed until 3am, except Sunday 11.30pm. Food in Heaven restaurant, main dishes about £1.60. House wine £4.80, pint lager £1, house drinks on Wednesday until midnight 50p. Spirits with mixer £1.10, club entry from 50p Wednesdays for 18-24s to £3.50 Saturdays. Some union card concessions, check with club for details. Live music, personal appearances, videos, disco.

an army of young men with elaborate brushes scurried about sweeping up imaginary ash into brass receptacles.

Three of the Hippodrome's more unusual guests introduced themselves as the 'Gruesome Threesome', Tony, Merv and Mal from Liverpool and Stoke-on-Trent, currently residing in Knightsbridge as squaddies in Her Majesty's Horse Guards. They liked the Hippodrome, it was for the in-crowd. Did it matter if they spent £40?

Like so many other recent artistic and social innovations the new "hip" generation of young nightclubbers had its origin on the gay fringe. The need to form a peacock parade of bright colours and outrageous social display in public stemmed directly from the lifting of legal and social restrictions on the gay com-



Derby's Blue Note illustrates this. A club with a capacity of 400, run by Phil Long, it has been attracting custom from all over the Midlands for four years. It has videos, lights, bars and food, but it also has conversation. The clientele is young, mostly female and buys very few cocktails. Dawn and Kathy, aged 18, and both at college, have travelled 15 miles to get here. They have been to London only twice and never to a club. They like the music because it's not too obscure. To them it is more like a party than a club. Melanie and Rachel, aged 20, are not trendy cocktail bar people though they might celebrate the end of their Government Training Scheme week with a Malibu cocktail. They resent the places like 42nd Street, where customers pretend to wear designer clothes. Those clubs want nice people but Derby isn't full of nice people. And being choosy costs you custom. The Blue Note started off with a door policy, but after two weeks it was empty, so now it lets anyone in. Back in London the smarter clubs were arranging their Christmas events. The Palace is offering special menus ranging from £8.50 to £14.50 a head, a Blondes Only party and a New Year's Eve Masked Ball. At the Hippodrome, Stringfellow is hosting a Variety Club do for 800 children. For the

community. It was out of the closet and into the eyes of the world.

One club which perhaps sparked off this wave of narcissistic yet proselytizing display was Heaven, the gay club situated underneath the arches near Charing Cross station. It was packed on the night I visited and the customers were paying rapt attention to the various acts on show.

Ian Levine the DJ, was pleased. The success of the night, a dance routine recorded for posterity by film director Ken Russell, indicated the club's position as style leader even among the straight clubs. Both the Palace and the Hippodrome have started gay nights of their own.

Outside London the recession has given all the clubs a different atmosphere. Manchester's Hacienda, Liverpool's State, Glasgow's Henry Afrikas and Nottingham's Rock City are excellent, but they cannot afford London's elitism. Drinks and admission are usually half the prices charged in the capital. Inside the people seem friendlier; there are fewer posers, the dress is less self-conscious.

regulars it is like Christmas every day. At Heaven David Inches promised: "There'll be lots and lots of snow, £500 worth."

Buckingham Palace - the ultimate coup de theatre. The Circus may soon be symptomatic of a new breed of cheaper club with £1 admission and £1 drinks. Dr Johnson's well-worn aphorism "When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford" is still true. For those who can afford it.

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Sitting pretty at the Camden Palace: Some of the faces who have brought a touch of glamour to the wilds of north-west London

One club which perhaps sparked off this wave of narcissistic yet proselytizing display was Heaven, the gay club situated underneath the arches near Charing Cross station. It was packed on the night I visited and the customers were paying rapt attention to the various acts on show.

Ian Levine the DJ, was pleased. The success of the night, a dance routine recorded for posterity by film director Ken Russell, indicated the club's position as style leader even among the straight clubs. Both the Palace and the Hippodrome have started gay nights of their own.

Outside London the recession has given all the clubs a different atmosphere. Manchester's Hacienda, Liverpool's State, Glasgow's Henry Afrikas and Nottingham's Rock City are excellent, but they cannot afford London's elitism. Drinks and admission are usually half the prices charged in the capital. Inside the people seem friendlier; there are fewer posers, the dress is less self-conscious.

Derby's Blue Note illustrates this. A club with a capacity of 400, run by Phil Long, it has been attracting custom from all over the Midlands for four years. It has videos, lights, bars and food, but it also has conversation. The clientele is young, mostly female and buys very few cocktails. Dawn and Kathy, aged 18, and both at college, have travelled 15 miles to get here. They have been to London only twice and never to a club. They like the music because it's not too obscure. To them it is more like a party than a club.

Melanie and Rachel, aged 20, are not trendy cocktail bar people though they might celebrate the end of their Government Training Scheme week with a Malibu cocktail. They resent the places like 42nd Street, where customers pretend to wear designer clothes. Those clubs want nice people but Derby isn't full of nice people. And being choosy costs you custom. The Blue Note started off with a door policy, but after two weeks it was empty, so now it lets anyone in. Back in London the smarter clubs were arranging their Christmas events. The Palace is offering special menus ranging from £8.50 to £14.50 a head, a Blondes Only party and a New Year's Eve Masked Ball. At the Hippodrome, Stringfellow is hosting a Variety Club do for 800 children. For the

community. It was out of the closet and into the eyes of the world.

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TRAVEL/1



To live in California is to inhabit a world of extremes. Michael Watkins gets to grips with the weird, appealing ways of the place where one day the kissing will have to stop

Cable cars and stars in the land of lunacy

Jessica Mitford flew out of San Francisco the day I flew in. I don't think there was anything personal in it: a question of imperfect timing, that's all. As I was checking into Nob Hill, she was doing much the same thing in London.

No, I wasn't being coy about Nob Hill; it's the address of the Mark Hopkins Hotel, from where you can watch fog steal in from the Pacific, obscuring Golden Gate Bridge in minutes.

"Everybody's Favourite City" is San Francisco's modest claim, coined, I believe, by Alistair Cooke. The song-writer takes up the refrain: someone left his heart in San Francisco, where little cable cars climb halfway to the stars. Someone else left his heart at Alcatraz, bleak and impregnable out there in the bay; his name was Al Capone. Usually you could hear the grinding lurch of those cable cars as they climbed vertiginously from Powell and Market Streets; but this time they were halted for the first time in history - so everyone walked, breathlessly, rapturously, in this breathless, rapturous city.

In my room, I spread out the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Ernie's Restaurant on Montgomery Street was still going, and Lauren Bacall was still going too, starring in *Woman of the Year* at the Golden Gate Theatre. Then I noticed that Rosemary Clooney was opening that evening, a supper show at the Fairmont; and because, at 11, I was unrequitedly in love with Miss Clooney, I booked a table.

Today Miss Clooney is a grandmother, wholesome as a wheatscrum, and she belted out "Come on a My House", and she caressed a foggy day in London town and I loved her

all over again. I told her so. That was after the show, in her suite. "This is a civilized city," she told me. "More European than anywhere in the States, they care about food, clothes, style. They care about caring."

I don't know exactly what caring about caring means. It is one of those meaningless Americanisms like "meaningful", or "have a nice day". Everyone keeps telling you to have a nice day; even empty elevators are programmed to wish you a nice day.

Next morning I went for a walk through Ghirardelli Square to Fisherman's Wharf, where a girl, far too glamorous to be in the balalaika business, asked, "You wanna be saved, brother?"

There are lots of kooky girls in the Cannery. They are interested in yoga, vegetarianism, cytochromes; and they will all turn into little old ladies in tennis shoes. Yet they are tolerated, venerated even; for San Francisco is a most forgiving city; the blacks forgive the whites who forgive the gays who forgive the Jews who forgive the gays. Bald is beautiful; and there are topless girls in bars watched gleefully by men with topless minds. "Talk to a totally nude girl for \$11," I read on a sign; it seemed a friendly thing to do.

Remembering her book *Hons and Rebels*, I asked Jessica Mitford Treuhaff's husband, Bob, if she was still rebellious. "She likes to preserve the image of a rebel," he said. He also said that California has a very seductive element to the British; he should know, the Treuhaffs have lived in San Francisco since 1943 - why, in southern California alone, there are 375,000 expatriate British.

Resisting superlatives, San Francisco is one of my favorite cities because it climbs hills while other cities spread out. It encourages its immigrants to retain their ethnic differences while other places assimilate them. It rejoices in a public transport system as archaic as Stephenson's Rocket. It bakes sourdough bread; and it is a launching pad projecting you towards Big Sur and a road south.

Monterey comes first, 120 miles from San Francisco; still a fishing town despite the goociness that happened to Sinatra a long time ago. I stayed the night there, eating clam chow-

der and abalone puffs at Rappa's on Old Fisherman's Wharf. The cabaret was terrific; a salty pride of sea-fishers made oink-oinking barks at a pelican demonstrating that its beak could hold more than its belly can.

A storm had blocked the coastal road beyond Big Sur. So I made a labyrinthine detour, which took hours; but you can't board time at the expense of beauty - that would be like neglecting the Sistine Chapel because you had a bus to catch. You dare not take your eyes off this road, so perilous is it; yet you must. It is Cornwall through a magnifying glass, hugely cruel, elemental. It was shaped by a force more omnipotent even than William Randolph Hearst, who built a monument to himself, a shrine if you prefer, calling it La Cuesta Encantada, the Enchanted Hill - more brutally known as Hearst Castle.

It is best to be anaesthetized

Hearst, they say, was the model for Citizen Kane, who had a dark dream and constructed a monumental folly of another kind. Years ago I met a guide at the San Simeon castle who had been in service in Hearst's time. Her name was Milly; she had a face of almost seraphic vacancy and was possessed of a seaham-type devotion for her master, Mr Hearst, she told me; was adorable; and there her case rested.

I could have made San Simeon to Los Angeles city limits that night, it's only 150 miles or so; but you need to steady yourself against the cultural shock waves of L.A. Exposing yourself too suddenly could lead to brain damage. So, like a penitent on the eve of revelation, I sought refuge at Morro Bay, savouring stiff ocean breezes and stiffer draughts of Jack Daniels. It is best to be numb, to be anaesthetized; for, if San Francisco welcomes you elegantly, Los Angeles greets you with a smart, with trombones and a hundred trendy expletives. LA survives through one cardinal rule: to be "with-it". Without it is to be the birds.

Los Angeles - indeed, every square inch of southern California - is mad, certifiably mad. And this palpable lunacy is

what, perversely no doubt, I like about the place. There is a dynamism in the air, a dynamism for freedom of expression; and if the formula contains lemming-like ingredients, then so be it.

There is a seismic certainty that California will detach itself from the American continent, drifting towards an even more enviable climate in the vicinity of Hawaii. And if the process is delayed too long, there is always the possibility that the Queen Mary, moored at Long Beach, could be commandeered as a towing agent. The future, you see, is insecure; one day the kissing will have to stop; if it's not Vietnam it will be Nicaragua, and if it's not Nicaragua some kid in Sacramento will by-pass the computer circuit at the Pentagon.

There are 460 square miles of LA, every yard in perpetual motion, 50 suburbs in search of a city. Nothing is allowed to unwind, least of all people whom you imagine should be taking it easy by now. Like Christopher Isherwood, still perched above Santa Monica Canyon, I hadn't seen him in ages. He hasn't changed much, the same undimmed blue eyes, the same incorrigible gleam of a prep-school boy opening his neckbox. He hasn't grown much either: he's a bit over 5ft, but not much.

The timing was better than with Jessica Mitford. "I'm off to New York tomorrow," he announced. "To collect some award worth \$16,000 - not to be

sniffed at", he added, sniffing. Isherwood first came with Auden in the 1930s but Auden felt California was "stagnant", so moved to New York, leaving his friend at MGM Studios, in company with Dorothy Parker.

"I think I'm 79", he said vaguely. "But I know I'm Californian. They don't ask where you're from, as long as you're yourself. There are few suburbs - all that's required is to be different, dig up an act, like being British. Anyway, I'm running out of kith and kin in England."

I left him on the "deck" of the house on Adelaide Drive. We had been admiring the sunset, Isherwood flapping his arms against his chest as if to ward off the frost of northern England that got to his bones these years ago. "You know," he said, "Sally Bowles was a real person." He looked like a satyr, jubilant, needing to surprise, yet wanting little else.

Certainly he wouldn't want a Rolls-Royce. "I thought next day, 'hunching' in Wilshire Boulevard with Anthony Thompson, President of Rolls-Royce Beverly Hills. Well, if Isherwood can do without a Rolls, there are 6,300 souls in the area to whom the vehicle is a necessity."

It's a way of showing quite conspicuously that that you've won your laurels", Thompson said. "There's a natural respect for wealth here."

That evening the fare was more frugal. Bangers and mash and John Courage beer at Ye Olde Kings' Head on Santa Monica Boulevard. I ate with John Gordon, the English publican, and a girl called Geri Jean. "The extremes are all here", said John. "And everything in between. Fads, cults, trends, all begin here. Everybody is clawing at being somebody, their 60 seconds of fame. They're all writers or actors, or out-of-work actors saying 'But I'm up for a great role'. There's a mass identity crisis."

There is no identity crisis about the Queen Mary, aboard which I spent that night in a teak-panelled cabin, all art deco and foot-operated Shanks lavatories. She carried captains and kings, the Windsors, Churchill, Laurel and Hardy, Coward and Dietrich, crossing the Atlantic

in three days, 20 hours and 42 minutes, using up 30,000 eggs during the passage. But California is looking after her; she sits proud at the Long Beach quay, every inch a lady.

There are two choices in Palm Springs: compete or keep a low profile - you know, a closed mouth gathers no foot. The competition is strenuous: the Annenbergs, Fords, Bob Hope, Sinatra, Kirk Douglas, Patrick McNee. You'd have to join a country club of course; one like the Vintage, entrance fee \$40,000, provided you own a house on the property, upwards of half a million. You'd need to be seen as well, at charity benefits, such as the Temple Isaiah party, \$10,000 minimum a couple.

You would need a dress or two as well, and a ton of jewelry; and a ready line in witty gossip. "My dear, she's such a good housekeeper. Every time she gets divorced, she keeps the house."

They are even working on open-air conditioning; one restaurant, Las Canelas, has it already. There is talk that entire streets will be air-conditioned, so that shopping for your essential Cartier, Hermès or groceries will be quite a treat in the 130°F summer temperatures. In Palm Springs, there is much concern with health, but pollen with royal jelly being

available on the supermarket shelves; bodies are being sensibly rejuvenated with spirulina plankton. Overnight octogenarians are turning into a seething mass of hormones.

I stayed with my old chum Zukowski, editor of *Palm Springs Life* magazine. "Let's play aphorisms", I suggested over a plateful of bean shoots. "How about living in Southern California guarantees the loss of a few IQ points a year?" she said. Seriously, on the surface, life here looks as easy as eating chocolate ice-cream. It's not. Like any place that extends a promise of instant fame and fortune, it's fraught with danger. The streets of Los Angeles, last frontier of the American dream, are paved with broken hearts.

Well, there's a California for you, as meaningfully as I can manage. Polythene-wrapped and sanitized for your personal protection. God supplied this particular Big Apple, as rowy a fruit as in the whole orchard of Eden; it's just that Adam cultivated a few maggots. Have a nice day.

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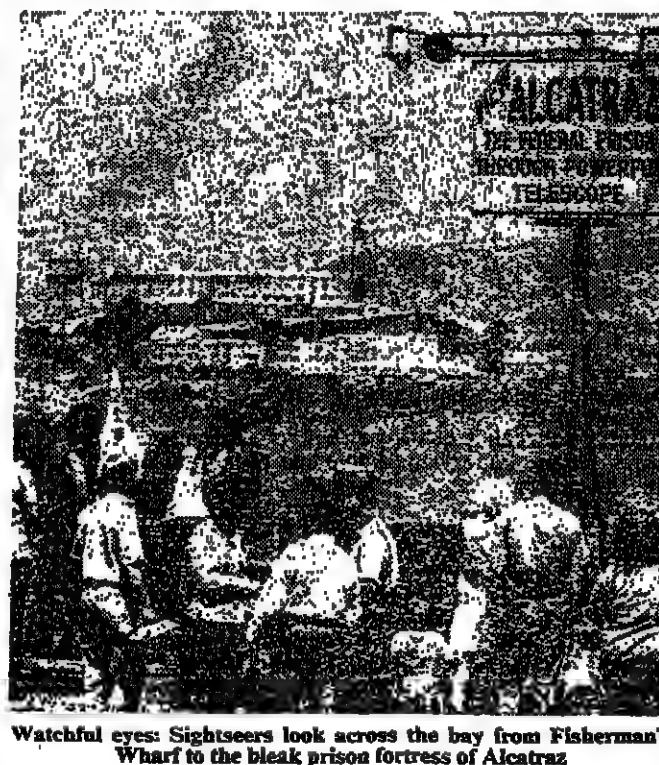
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Watchful eyes: Sightseers look across the bay from Fisherman's Wharf to the bleak prison fortress of Alcatraz

Scotching the rumours about the Italians

As another ski season opens, those who keep their eyes on the popularity stakes will have noticed that Austria has once again replaced Italy at the top of the league and become the most favoured destination among British skiers.

This reversal is a little curious, for when it comes to sheer quantity and variety of skiing, Italy far outpaces Austria, where the skiing, for all its excellence, does tend to be very much of a piece. If there is an answer, other than that fashions change, it is probably that the Austrians are serious about skiing, while the Italians are how can one put it - just a little laid back.

How much truth there is in

this feeling is hard to establish, but it is certainly more than a nasty rumour put about by the envious to put the Italians down.

Last winter, we arrived in the resort of Santa Caterina, to find that although the resort was open, the pistes were still unused. Someone had borrowed the Piste Bully tractor to smarten up some slope for a race. My lift ticket went into the electronic gate-slot all right, but it wouldn't come out again, and the idea of passing the morning tied by the neck to a turnstile isn't much of a turn-on.

I must say that our instructor was charming. With the amount of practice he put in he couldn't help but be charming. On the other hand, an hour's lesson which consisted of 10 minutes

skiing and 50 minutes standing about while he chatted to the female skiers, cooled both my feet and my admiration.

Down the road in Bormio, a very attractive resort, rightly popular with the British, the pistes were in very good condition, and we had a great morning's skiing until the stroke of noon. Then the lifts stopped and stayed stopped for nearly two hours, while all right-minded people stoked up on pasta. Unless, of course, you happened to be at the bottom of some far-distant slope and unable to get back. I'm all for a nice long lunch hour but I do so like to be told.

That little hiccup apart, Bormio is a great place for

skiing and gives the lie to those nasty rumours that the Italians buy their lift systems fifth-hand, probably from Bulgaria, and service them with several coats of paint. The lifts at Bormio were being serviced regularly, some all the time.

On to the bus then, and off across the pass to Livigno. Livigno has one Great Good Thing and one Great Bad Thing. The Great Good Thing is the six-hour transfer time from Milan Airport. The Great Good Thing is that the resort is duty free and therefore away with cut-price liquor. The skiing takes place on the slopes on either side of the valley, and one has to decide each morning which side of the valley to ski on, for the two are not linked. There is said to be a shuttlebus which roves between the two, but our inquiries for this useful service produced only the response: "Domani".

Domani has been rightly described as a word having much the same meaning as *mañana*, but without the same sense of urgency. Here too, someone had made off with the Piste Bully.

Our return, by bus and train to Milan, was something of an odyssey. This was yet another surprise because Italy is the country where the trains are said to run on time, as indeed they do. The snag is that they are timed to arrive in any junction just five minutes after the onward connection has departed.

But let me not become sour. It is only fair to add that our visit was in mid-December, at the very start of the season, and no doubt as time went on it all perked up. Besides, the people were friendly, the resorts delightful, the prices less than painful, the food finger-lickin' good, and the sun shone.

Rob Neillands

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REVIEW Video cassettes

Glimpses behind the mask of a master clown

For once we have a subject that video does proud. Not only are most of the best Chaplin films available on cassette - the early one and two-reelers as well as the features - but there are now two worthwhile and complementary documentaries on his life and work.

The Gentleman Tramp, made in the United States and narrated by Walter Matthau, is a straightforward introduction, useful both for those coming upon Chaplin for the first time and as a refresher course for the initiated. It summarizes Chaplin's career up to that embarrassing episode of the special Oscar in 1971 and provides generous extracts from the films.

Without pressing the point too far, the cassette links life and art by showing how the films were often rooted in personal experience. Thus *The Kid* refers back to Chaplin's childhood in the London slums of Kennington and *A King in New York* reflects, with less subtlety and more bitterness, his treatment by the American authorities which led to his exile in Switzerland. The tape has the bonus of the 1919 two-reel, *Sunnyside*.

While *The Gentleman Tramp* is an assembly of mainly familiar material, *Unknown Chaplin* includes much that has never been shown in public before, as well as rare interviews with Chaplin's second wife, and two of his leading ladies, Georgia Hale from *The Gold Rush* and Virginia Cherrill of *City Lights*.

Originally transmitted as a three-part series by Thames Television, *Unknown Chaplin* came about through Lady Chaplin making her film vanities available to those indefatigable cine-archaeologists, Kevin Brownlow and David Gill, with the American collector Raymond Robauer also yielding up much unseen material. Brownlow and Gill found themselves

The Gentleman Tramp (1974, 72 mins) Sunnyside (1919, 18 mins) PolyGram, £33
Unknown Chaplin (1983, 156 mins) Thorn EMI, £37.50

with a treasure-house of rushes, out-takes, complete sequences shot, cut but never used, and home movies.

What emerges from their expert compilation is a surprising endorsement of Edison's view that genius is one per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration. Chaplin worked out his films as he went along, having no script and relying on his talent and intuition to carry him through. Often the ideas would not come, and the results were endless retakes of the same scene, gag elaborately worked out and then abandoned and actors and crews standing by for days, weeks and even months waiting for the little man's creativity to return.

The cassette is most revealing about *City Lights*. At one stage, of 534 days scheduled for shooting, 368 had been idle. Halfway through Chaplin fired Virginia Cherrill and started all over again with Georgia Hale, only to recall Cherrill (at twice the salary) when he realized that the project was too far advanced. He also spent much time and effort shooting a seven-minute routine that was to have opened the film before deciding not to use it.

These insights into Chaplin at work only serve to re-whet the appetite for the finished work. Titles available (all on PolyGram, prices £33 to £37.50) include *The Gold Rush*, *The Circus*, *City Lights*, *Modern Times*, *The Great Dictator*, *Monsieur Verdoux* and *Lime-light*, with *A Woman of Paris* due next year.

Peter Waymark



Chaplin and his leading lady Cherrill: He fired and rehired her during the shooting of *City Lights*

Graphic designs on the birds and bees

Most aspects of life are already covered by video. So it may come as no surprise that you can now learn to hatch and match, though not, as yet, to dispatch.

"Learning to love and finding out about the facts of life is not always easy", says Marje Proops in *Learning to Love*, a video for the young, which shows her as a bird and a bee. Marje is a young woman, who introduces us to Janet and John, two cartoon characters who marry while young and ignorant, and end up sending her anxious letters about sex.

The video describes the changes of puberty and the processes of reproduction with the help of some anatomical graphics. Anxieties are allayed all round, though several animated line drawings of a couple making love might disturb, rather than reassure, some of the young teenagers at whom the cassette is aimed. In fact there is precious little

Learning to Love with Marje Proops (50 mins) Video Space, £19.95
Having a Baby (108 mins) BBC Video, £24.95
The New Good Birth Guide by Sheila Kitzinger (120 mins) Palace Video, £19.95

real help here for the youngster: no hard information, for example, on contraception or how to cope with teenage pregnancy. Just young teenagers in group discussions, relating their problems: "Me dad told me 'dug me up in the garden and when 'e saw me 'e screamed an' run indoors."

The BBC's *Having a Baby* reflects its origins as an educational series. Filmed largely at Bristol Maternity Hospital, it offers a comprehensive guide to conception, pregnancy, labour and early parenthood, with the aid of clear graphics. We follow four

couples from different backgrounds as they visit their GPs, clinics and antenatal classes; we share their hopes and fears, and accompany two of the mothers into labour. Later they and their husbands describe the effect of their babies on their lives.

This comprehensive account would be useful as an educational film for older teenagers as well as for mothers-to-be, and would grace an antenatal class; but it is an establishment product and that shows, for example, when a physiotherapist tells her class they will be taught to be passive in the first stage of labour, active in the second...

Passivity of any kind would, of course, be anathema to Sheila Kitzinger, high priestess of natural childbirth, whose *New Good Birth Guide* is aimed exclusively at parents-to-be and is essentially a consumer guide. Little of the material will be new to women who have

attended a good National Childbirth Trust class.

Most of the action takes place in Mrs Kitzinger's sitting room, where a group of articulate, middle-class women, some with their men in tow, talk of their attitudes and expectations about the births of their babies. For "partners" (no "husbands" here) there's a special apron filled with 30lb of sand to bring home the reality of late pregnancy. Effective use is also made of a rag doll.

Mrs Kitzinger is an inspiring teacher, sound on advice such as how to choose the place of birth or refuse a foetal monitor, controversial in her advocacy of home births and positively effusive over relaxation techniques as alternatives to analgesia. But I wonder how many mothers would agree that the crowning of a baby's head felt like the petals of a peony opening?

Susan Ellis

Diversions for the armchair critics

For ballet lovers video has one immediate attraction. The view from an armchair is a lot more comfortable and less obstructed than that from an orchestra stall (not to mention an upper slip). The disadvantages become clearly evident, though, as soon as you settle down to watch. A completely visible small screen lacks the clarity and drama of even a partly obscured stage; close camerawork sometimes accentuates the dancers' difficulties; and there is a risk of poor reproduction of the music.

I suppose the purpose of these tapes then is to provide either a home introduction to the beauties of ballet or a permanent record of a treasured performance.

Dr Coppellus has to be the former. It is, as the blurb says, "a ballet-story film enacted and expanded on screen". It softens and sentimentalizes the already pretty soppy Coppella story. Dr Coppellus becomes a benign old buffer (Walter Cook) insistently making eyes at the camera to press home the point. As improbable a tavern wench as ever banged out the beer in Minskulepa (Eileen Elliott) is invented to love, and eventually, wed him.

"This is 'Entertainment'!" the label boasts (their quotation marks and emphasis), and I would agree that it is only ballet at its most trite level. Much more delicious and diverting is the Covent Garden performance of Frederick Ashton's *La Fille mal gardée*, more than competently directed for BBC Television by John Vernon. This must be the model of how to transpose stage performance directly to the screen - using a liberal number of cameras, well placed to show the dancers and the action at their best.

This tape is a pleasure to have. Lesley Collier is a delightful Lise, and Michael Coleman, albeit a mite below top form, a winning Colas. My only reservation (and this is nostalgic and mean) is that it would have been wonderful to have had Stanley Holden's Widow Simone and Alexander Grant as Alain. Brian Shaw and Garry Grant, good as they are,

Dr Coppellus (90 mins) Precision Video, £40.99
La Fille mal gardée (98 mins) Thorn EMI, £37.50
Simon (115 mins) Thorn EMI, £37.50
Romeo and Juliet (125 mins) Precision Video, £40.99

do not quite capture the fullest magic of the roles.

A similar yearning plagued my viewing of Kenneth MacMillan's *Manon*. Having just seen Natalia Makarova's pliant and passionate interpretation in vital and vivid real life at the Royal Opera House, I found Jennifer Penney at the most pallid on screen. On stage, I remember, she does project some of the sexuality the role requires. Here she appears a neat and competent dancer, a suburban sylph rather than a coquette and courtesan. But then the screen also reduces the stage sets and designs, which are subtly matched and shaded, to dangerously dreary non-tones.

With *Romeo and Juliet* one would rather have another ballet. This one, restaged for filming by Patricia Foy at the Palazzo della Sport with the cast from La Scala, Milan, if Rudolf Nureyev's production with his self-serving choreography. It could almost have the title abbreviated to *Romeo*; Nureyev hogs the star dancing, and his surprisingly ungracious and ungainly choreography does not give Carla Fracci adequate opportunity to overcome the fact that she is in any case no natural Juliet. She is long-legged and lissome in the way of a woman of the world rather than an enraptured girl.

And who would not want a record of Margot Fonteyn doing rather something more than that walk-on tragic heroine Lady Capulet? Kenneth MacMillan's marvellous Royal Opera House version is considered kinder to both Prokofiev and Shakespeare, but Nureyev's (recorded here with sadly woolly musical accompaniment) was at least delightfully devoted fans.

Robin Young

Next week: Video round-up of 1983

PREVIEW Theatre

Man with the gravelly voice is back where he belongs

Tommy Trinder celebrates 62 years in show business by returning to the familiar world of pantomime in *Aladdin* at the Shaftesbury Theatre. He is playing an elderly police constable, a part written especially for him.

"I wander on to the stage at various times in the evening, and the others keep asking where they've seen my face before", says Trinder who, at 74, still has the unmistakable jawline and battered tribby hat.

One of the oldest comedians working, he began his career as a boy singer in an Islington music hall. His first pant, in 1921, was *Dick Whittington* at the unlikely address of the Manor Place, rather in Walworth Road, south London. His favourite part was Buttons with Evelyn Laye as Prince Charming, "but time has marched on since then, and I've worked my way through *Aladdin* to the Emperor of China and now a Chinese policeman."

Aladdin is produced and devised by Paul Elliott who, with 15 other shows opening around Christmas, is becoming something of a panto king. Elliott dislikes the recent trend for pantomimes to become stardusted variety shows and is

getting back to the tradition of telling a story rather than putting on a string of TV commercial jokes.

He has got together an interesting cast - Jill Gascoine of the television series *The Goodies*, plays *Aladdin*, the singer Lysey de Paul is the Princess and the ballerina Doreen Wells has a dancing role as the Genie. The script also steers clear of "adult" jokes that pass over the heads of children.

"It's strictly family entertainment", says Trinder. "I have never stood for any off-colour jokes. The lights go down, the orchestra tunes up and you get the kind of atmosphere you need to find in a cinema. I don't think panto has changed very much over the years. You still get all those favourite bits of audience participation - kids shouting, 'Oh yes you did!' at the villain and all that."

Trinder was well known as a television personality in the 1950s with his catch phrase, "Oh you lucky people!" when he compered *Sunday Night at the London Palladium*, and he appeared in numerous Royal Variety performances. He continues to work all over the world, from panto in Australia to a summer show at Skegness.

A couple of weeks ago, he returned to his stand-up comedian routine at the Royal Festival Hall during an evening in aid of the Police Benevolent Fund.

"Nowadays I start off with a dance, and then tell them: 'You see, I'm not as old as you thought I was.' I usually do a bit of political stuff in my act, Mrs Thatcher and so on, but I thought I'd keep off it with that particular audience. I've always been strong on adding, which makes it disconcerting for other actors when there's a script and they're waiting for a cue that doesn't come."

The gravelly voice is vintage Trinder: "My wife never looks for me when she comes into a room, she listens. I never stop talking, and I'm now writing my autobiography with a tape recorder. I've called it *Ham and Ego*. People always told me I should write a book, then I realized there was money in it."

Clare Colvin

Aladdin is at the Shaftesbury Theatre (836 6596) today at 2.30 and 7.30pm, continuing with performances a day until Jan 14, then evenings at 7.30pm with matinees on Wed, Thurs and Sat at 2.30pm until Feb 4.



Tommy Trinder: The trouser with the tribby in new headgear

Critics' choice

PACK OF LIES (437 3685)
Mon-Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 5pm and 8.15pm; matinees Wed at 3pm
Hugh Whitmore's powerful study of a decent couple whose quiet suburban life is destroyed by a Kroger-style spy case. Judi Dench and Michael Williams find impressively tragic performances in the most humdrum surroundings.

THE RIVALS (828 2252)
Thurs at 7.15pm, Fri at 2pm and 7.15pm

Out of Town

"New" show using the songs of many composers to trace the history of the American musical. World premiere production, directed by Leslie Lawton, who also leads the cast with Sheila O'Neill.

LEICESTER: Haymarket (0533 535797). *West Side Story* by Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Laurents, Stephen Sondheim. Until Feb 4 (at least), Mon, Tues, Thurs at 7.30pm, Wed, Fri, Sat at 8pm; matinees Wed and Sat at 4.30pm. Times differ in Christmas week.

Spectacular revival of the musical update of the *Romeo and Juliet* story set in New York. Songs include "Tonight", "Maria", "Somewhere" and "America".

MANCHESTER: Royal Exchange (061 833 9233). *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville, adapted by Michael Elliot. Opens Thurs at 7pm, until Jan 28, Mon and Tues at 7.30pm, Wed-Sat at 8pm; matinees Wed at 2.30pm, Sat at 4.30pm. On Dec 27 and Jan 2 matinees Jan 21 at 4pm.

7.15pm. In repertory with Janet Seberg by Marvin Hamlisch, Christopher Adler, Julian Barry (today at 2pm and 7.15pm) and *Tales From Hollywood* by Christopher Hampton (Mon at 7.15pm, Tues at 2pm and 7.15pm). Peter Wood's sparkling revival of Sheridan fulfils the promise of its cast list. Geraldine McEwan as a young but furiously affected Mrs Malaprop, Sir Michael Hordern gaily and frantically, Patrick Ryecart as a witty hero.

THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL (043 5122)
Mon-Sat at 7.30pm, matinees Wed and Sat at 3pm
First seen some months ago at the

Haymarket, John Barton's handsome and intelligent production returns for Christmas with, as before, Donald Sinden and Beryl Reid in their broadest comic vein, plus some promising new recruits including Nicola Pagett and Clive Francis.

TURNING OVER (438 3388)
Tues-Sun at 8pm
Soon to be seen on television in *The Raj Quartet*, Geraldine James and Charles Dance inhabit another Indian setting in this thoughtful and very funny play: a hill-station where a quarrelling documentary team is shooting a film about the happy life.

Famous farce, one of many written for the Aldwych company in the 1920s.

STRATFORD: Royal Shakespeare (0788 235623). *Twelfth Night*. Today and Thurs at 1.30pm John Caird directs Emrys James, Daniel Massey, Gemma Jones, John Thaw.

Julius Caesar. Wed at 7.30pm Joseph O'Connor, Peter McEnery, Emrys James, Nigel Cooke, directed by Ron Daniels.

Henry VIII. Tues at 7.30pm First Stratford production since 1969. Howard Davies directs Richard Griffiths, Paul Greenwood, John Thaw, Sarah Berger, Gemma Jones.

Measure for Measure. Mon at 7.30pm New production, directed by Adrian Noble. Daniel Massey, Richard O'Callaghan.

The Comedy of Errors. Today at 7.30pm, Thurs and Fri at 7.30pm Paul Greenwood, Peter McEnery, Zoe Wanamaker, Richard O'Callaghan, Joseph O'Connor, directed by Adrian Noble.

THEATRE: Irving Wardle and Anthony Masters, Galleries John Russell Taylor; Photography: Michael Young; Dance: John Percival

PHOTOGRAPHY

NIGHT TRICK (581 4444). *Silvia* Gallery, 58 High Street, Edinburgh (031-557 1140). Until Jan 7, Tues-Sat 12.30-5pm. Nostalgia run not with Winston Link's stage-mannered view of the Norfolk and Western Railway and the everyday life surrounding it in small-town America during the 1950s.

RAIL IMAGES Royal Photographic Society, The Octagon, Milestone Street, Bath (0225 62841). Wed until Feb 4, Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm. Interest in old railways abounds, be

it in the form of memorabilia or preserved steam trains. Most of the pictures were taken before the Second World War and many date from the 1850s.

A VANISHED WORLD Ben Ruri Gallery, 21 Dean Street, London W1 (01-487 2852). Until Dec 29, Wed 10.30am-6.30pm, Thur 10.30am-7.30pm, Sun 3-6pm. Roman Vishniac (now 86 and living in New York) travelled 5,000 miles between 1904 and 1937 photographing the Jews of Eastern Europe. Of the 16,000 photographs he took only 2,000 survived; 50 are in this exhibition. A poignant view of a civilization destroyed by Hitler.

THE GENIUS OF VENICE 1500-1600. Royal Academy, Piccadilly, London W1 (734 9552). Until Mar 11, daily 10am-6pm. The sixteenth century was the most glorious epoch for Venetian art. Carpaccio's painting "The Lion of St Mark" symbolizes Venetian power and introduces an exhibition of 300 masterpieces drawn from collections throughout the world, including the recently restored "Judgement of Solomon" painted by Giorgione or Sebastiano del Piombo, or the two together.

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graces in the eighteenth century. Also (until Jan 8) pictures by William Dobson, the leading British-born portrait painter of the seventeenth century.

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NATURAL HISTORY IN ART Eyre and Hobbhouse, 38 Duke Street, St James's, London SW1 (930 9308). Until Dec 23, Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm. Watercolours and drawings which chart the growth of interest in unfamiliar animals, fossils and insects from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries in Europe, China and India.

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PREVIEW Galleries

RAOUL DUFI Hayward Gallery, South Bank, London SE1 (928 3144). Until Feb 5, Mon-Wed 10am-6pm, Thurs-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun non-6pm.

Running concurrently with the exhibition of Hockney photographs is the largest survey of Dufy's art ever staged. The radiant and optimistic painter of yachts, regatta, racecourse scenes and harvests is represented by several paintings not seen before in England, while four large murals commissioned by Guy Weyssweiller for his villa at Antibes are being given their first public display.

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THE WEEK AHEAD

Today

CAROLS: The Royal Choral Society under Meradeth Davies leads the singing in the traditional family carol concert today at 2.30pm and 7.30pm and on Mon at 7.30pm, tickets £1.25-£2. On Tue there is a Victorian Christmas celebration, with Prunella Scales as Queen Victoria and Robert Hardy as Prince Albert, at 7.30pm. £1-£2. Julian Lloyd-Webber, Roger Whittaker and the Goldsmiths Choral Union sing carols in aid of the Save the Children Fund, attended by Princess Anne, on Wed at 7pm, tickets £1-£2. And the New National Youth Choir give a Christmas concert on Thurs at 7.30pm, tickets £1.50-£2.50. Royal Albert Hall, London SW7 (S88 8212).

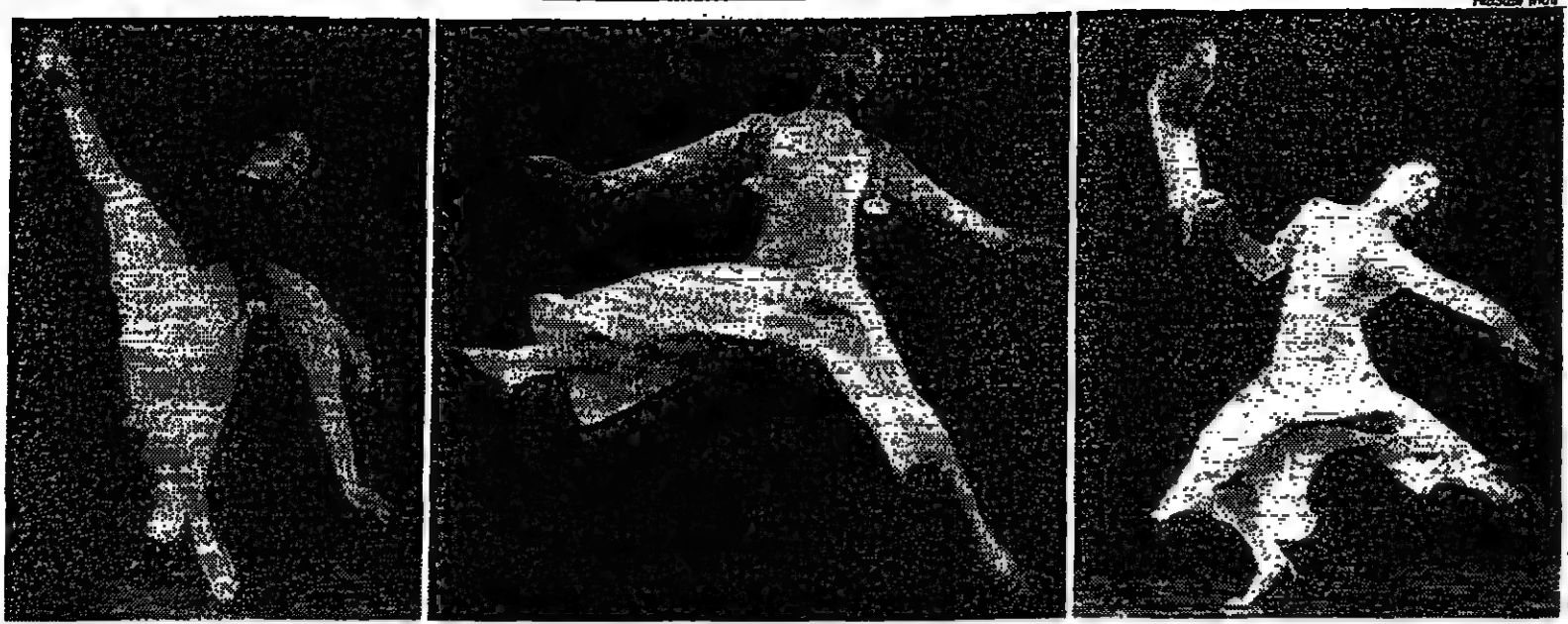
SOUTH BANK CAROLS: The Massed Chorus of the London Hospitals are joined by the Fanfare Trumpeters of the Royal Corps of Signals in two concerts today in the Royal Festival Hall, at 3pm and 7.30pm, tickets £2-£6.50, while the City of London Choir and Fanny Brax Ensemble lead carols in the Queen Elizabeth Hall, 7.45pm, tickets £2-£4.50.

MESSIAH: Handel's oratorio, receives several performances this week. Today it is the turn of St Paul's Festival Choir and Orchestra at St Paul's Church, Wilton Place, London, SW1 at 7.30pm, tickets £3. Tomorrow, Jane Glover conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall at 7.30pm, tickets £2-£7, and Richard Hickox conducts the City of London Sinfonia and the Richard Hickox Singers at the Barbican at 7pm, tickets £2-£7. On Wed, Edward de Rivera conducts the chorus of the Chelsea Harmonic Society at the Queen Elizabeth Hall at 7.45pm, tickets £2.50-£6.50.

PETER PAN: The Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of the J.M. Barrie fantasy opens on Thurs at 7pm. With Mark Preece as Peter, Stephen Moore as Mr Darling and Captain Hook, Frances Tomelty as Mrs Darling and Katy Beahan as Wendy, John Carr directs. Barbican (828 8795/838 889). Previews today, Mon and Tues at 7.30pm. Wed at 2pm and 7.30pm. Until Jan 28, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Tues (except Jan 3), Thurs and Sat (also Jan 2) at 2pm.

SINBAD THE SAILOR: Ken Dodd and his Diddymen feature in this first London revival of the show since 1907. With Michael Robbins, Jacques Toye, Wimbledon Theatre (540 0265). Opens today at 2.30pm and 7pm. Until Feb 4, Mon-Sat at 2.30pm and 7pm (matinees only on Dec 24, Jan 8, 22, 29, evenings only Jan 6, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27, 29, 31, Feb 3).

THE YEARS BETWEEN: First radio production of Daphne du Maurier's play, staged in London in 1945, about a husband and wife trying to pick up the threads after a long wartime separation. Radio 4, 8.30-10pm.



Stimulating steps: Three moves from "Nine Sinatra Songs" by Shelley Washington and Keith Young of Twyla Tharp (see Dance)

Tomorrow

PELICAN DELTA: The delta of the River Danube is the most important remaining area for wildlife in Europe, twice the size of the Camargue and home for more than 45 species of fish and hundreds of species of birds from Europe, Asia and Africa. Not to mention wild carp and catfish which flourish in its lakes and channels leading out to the Black Sea. Director/cameraman Alan McGregor presents a filmed report on the region, which is threatened by both drainage and agriculture. BBC2, 7.45-8.40pm.

PRANKS: The Forty Minutes documentary takes a light-hearted seasonal look at various unlikely services available for hire, including a couple of stripping nurses who have set up in business with a government grant, and an amorous pair who are engaged to live on sedate parties and the booming trade in kites. BBC2, 9.35-10.15pm.

Monday

PAINTINGS QUIZ: The National Gallery is running two quizzes which demand a more careful look at its paintings. For adults, the quiz comprises a series of clues whose answers follow a seasonal theme. Five £25 vouchers for use in the gallery's shop will reward correct solutions opened on Jan 9. For children, the quiz begins on Dec 27 and has a ghostly theme, including a question about the extra foot in *The Armchair Marriage*. There is also a ghost story cartoon competition. Prizes are the prizes. The National Gallery, London WC2 (839 3324). Competitions open until Jan 8, Mon-Sat 10am-5pm. Sun, 2-5pm (gallery closed Dec 23-26 and Jan 1). Free.

LUNCHTIME AT THE PALACE: Entertainment at the Palace Theatre, organized by its owner, Andrew Lloyd Webber. Today The Actor's Centre Choir sings carols, aided by Bonnie Langford and Sarah Brightman. Tomorrow the Kesh dance, on Wed

Richard Stilgoe entertains; there is a juggler and illusionist on Thurs; and Andrew Lloyd Webber and friends hold a Christmas party on Fri Palace Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue (437 6634). Noon-2.30pm, with mulligatawni, bar drinks and Christmas food available. Adults £2, children and pensioners £1.

HI-DE-HIT: The stage version of the popular television comedy series, set in a 1950s holiday camp opens at the Victoria Palace (828 4735) on Thurs at 8.30pm. With Simon Cadell, Ruth Madoc, Paul Shane, Jeffrey Holland and guest star Ben Warriss. Previews today at 7.30pm, Tues and Wed at 6pm and 8.30pm, Thurs at 6pm, until Mar 10, Mon at 7.30pm, Tues-Sat at 6pm and 8.30pm.

THE WIZARD OF OZ: Charlie Drake and Fanelia Fielding have leading roles (as the Cowardly Lion and the Wicked Witch of the West) in this stage version of the MGM film musical, using the original songs and music. The Wizard of Oz, Bromley, Kent (460 6877). Opens today at 7.30pm, until Jan 7, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm and 7.30pm, then until Jan 21, Thurs and Sat at 4.15pm (except Jan 21 at 2.30pm).

GOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME: Six months in the life of a policeman's son, aged 22, from Jarrow. Steve Cram, recently voted BBC Television sports personality of 1983. The film follows him through a series of injuries, altitude training in the snows of Colorado, his struggle even to qualify for the world championships and his eventual triumph in the 1500 metres. Channel 4, 9-10pm.

A TALENT FOR MURDER: Lord Olivier makes his first appearance in a BBC Television drama, an adaptation of the comedy thriller by Jerome Chodorov and Norman Panama which ran for two years on Broadway. He plays the English doctor of an American detective writer (Angela Lansbury). As the writer's family gather at her home to celebrate her birthday, murder is committed and each person becomes a suspect. BBC2, 9.25-10.55pm.

Tuesday

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL: The London Symphony Orchestra gives three concerts of seasonal music, conducted by Richard Hickox. Vivaldi's "Winter" from *The Four Seasons*, Britten's *A Ceremony of Carols*, Bach's "Christmas Eve Joyful" from the *Christmas Oratorio* and other music are played before the interval, after which there are carols for orchestra, chorus and audience. Barbican Hall, London EC2 (828 8795). Today, tomorrow and Thurs at 7pm. Tickets £3-£5.

ORWELL ON JURA: With 1984 only two weeks away, be prepared for an avalanche of media reassessments of George Orwell and his last novel with its nightmare vision of a totalitarian society. This drama documentary, written by Alan Plater, follows the three-year preparation of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* on the Hebridean island of Jura and Orwell's struggle to finish the book against falling health. He is played by Ronald Pickup. BBC1, 9.25-10.55pm.

Wednesday

TREASURED POSSESSIONS: Owners of historic houses in England, Scotland and Wales have lent more than 200 works of art for an exhibition mounted in conjunction with the Historic Houses Association. Many pieces have close connections with the houses they come from, such as Chippendale furniture from Burton Constable Hall for which it was commissioned and a portrait of the third Duke of Norfolk attributed to Holbein from Arundel Castle. Schayby, New Bond Street, London W1 (463 8040). Until Jan 20, Mon-Sat 10.30am-5.30pm, Sun 2.30-5.30pm. Admission £2 including full catalogue.

GOING, GOING: The history of motoring, cycling and flight is encompassed in a giant sale of 550 lots. Mascots, trophies, commemorative items, equipment, pictures,

books, ephemera, penny-farthings, a Napoleonic tricycle and some nautical items are for sale. For motorists who have everything there are some stunning Lalique radiator mascots at around £2,000. Phillips, Blenheim Street, London W1 (529 6802) at noon.

A NEW DASH: Wayne Sleep and his company of 12 dancers are back in the West End with a show which incorporates many new routines. Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, London W1 (580 9562/323 1576). Opens today at 7pm. For a season, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Sat at 2.30pm.

DICK WHITTINGTON: Roy Hudd, June Whitfield, Hugh Lloyd, Richard Murdoch, Honor Blackman and John Hanson are in a new show written by Roger Redgrave. Richmond Theatre, The Green, Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey (840 0088). Opens today at 7.30pm. Until Jan 7, Mon-Sat at 2.30pm and 7.30pm, then until Feb 2, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Tues, Thurs and Sat at 2.30pm.

MADAME BUTTERFLY: Jean-Pierre Ponnelle's celebrated 1974 film of Puccini's tragic opera about the Japanese geisha who is loved and abandoned by an American marine lieutenant, Placido Domingo and Mirella Freni sing the leading roles (in Italian, with English subtitles) and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is conducted by Herbert von Karajan. Channel 4, 9-11.50pm.

THE ROADS OF EXILE: Francois Simon stars as the eighteenth century Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau in a two-part television film directed by Claude Goretta (best known for his movie *Le Gamin*), born in Geneva. The film follows Rousseau's flight through Europe, followed by his servant girl mistress, as his latest book is condemned by the authorities in France. part one 10.45-12.25am; part two tomorrow, 11.10pm-1am.

Thursday

COUNTRY LINES: A lovely piece of railway nostalgia as *Breakfast Time* reporter Nigel Farrell travels on four of the most picturesque and remote branch lines on the British Rail network: Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge in Wales; Settle to Carlisle, which is threatened with closure; St Erth to St Ives in Cornwall; and the West Highland line in Scotland, which has the highest and the loneliest station in Britain. BBC1, 2-2.30pm.

ACCOUNTS: The latest in the series of films produced under the auspices of Channel 4 is a sensitive study of a widow and her two sons who pull up their Northumbrian roots and take on a new farm in the harsh Scottish border country near Kelso. It was written by Michael Wilcock, from the stage play which won him the 1981 George Devine award for the most promising young theatre writer, and directed by Michael Derlow. Channel 4, 9.30-11.20pm.

Friday

WINNING CAROL: The BBC Television Carol Competition, now in its eighth year and being run for the first time by *Breakfast Time*, has attracted nearly 2,000 entries from schools, who were asked to compose an original carol and send in a cassette of it being performed. Today the six finalists will perform their compositions in Southwell Minster, Nottinghamshire, before a judging panel of Rod Argent, Kid Dee and Peter Skellern. BBC1, 5.40-7.15pm.

HELLO DOLLY! Denny La Rue, Lionel Jeffries, Lorna Dallas open in the first ever production of the popular Jerry Herman musical star a woman. Directed by Peter Cox. Prince of Wales (930 8881). Today at 7.30pm. Until Apr 28, Mon-Sat at 7.30pm; matinees Thurs and Sat at 2.30pm.

PRIDE OF OUR ALLEY: The busy Alan Plater turns from the tortured last years of George Orwell to the Lancashire mill girl Grace Stanfield, who, as Grace Fields, became one of Britain's most popular entertainers and a folk heroine who has not only coped with an age span of 60 years but has the formidable charm of a child recreating that unique voice. All ITV regions, 8.15-9.45pm.

DOIN' WHAT COMES NATURALLY: Sheridan Morley looks at the phenomenon of Irving Berlin, now 85, who had his first big success with Alexander's Ragtime Band and went on to write more than 3,000 songs, though he never learned to read music and composed on a piano with an automatic key-changing device. Taking part in the programme are Alan Jay Lerner, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Ethel Merman and Jerome Robbins. Radio 4, 8.30-10pm.

Week following
Dec 24 (Christmas Eve): Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. King's College, Cambridge, at 3pm.

Country Diary

Changes at home on the ranges

The last country diary I wrote was criticized in some quarters for harping too much on motorways and, worse still, for being apparently in their favour. So let me begin this one, even more improbably, at an airfield outside Watford on a cold, grey murky winter morning.

My host is Robin Mallin, who learnt to fly in the Royal Air Force and nowadays does most of his business travelling at the controls of a Cessna six-seater. Our destination is what conservationists call the English prairies, the East Anglian cornbelt where in the past few years farmers have ruthlessly stripped away trees and hedges to make room for bigger machines and bigger profits.

Robin, relaxed and affable, is not an easy man to dislike. But for many people farmers as well as environmentalists, he symbolizes all that is worst about contemporary British agriculture and poses a dire threat to what is left of our traditional rural society.

He is managing director of a firm called Velocour, which farms some 24,000 acres of land owned by City institutions. It also farms 40,000 acres in Australia and has recently set up a technical consultancy in France to teach the locals how to grow wheat and barley more efficiently.

It began life, back in 1966, when he and three fellow farmers decided to pool their resources. Only two of the original four partners remain. The three farms we are to see today are all owned by the Hill Samuel Unit Trust. We land a few miles from Cambridge and are met by James King, the regional manager and son of Velocour's chairman. On our way to the first farm we pass Wimpole Hall, once the home of Rudyard Kipling and now owned by the National Trust. Here breeds of cattle graze in the grounds, and there is a group of beautifully restored little barns by the roadside.

It is, I wonder, the shape of things to come; bits and pieces of the countryside preserved as rural museums, while all around them the new agribusiness managers go about their task of wresting ever higher yields from soils drenched in fertilizers and herbicides? It certainly looks that way as we drive on through huge fields green with fast-burgeoning winter crops, with not a hedgerow to be seen and only an occasional forlorn and solitary tree.

But Velocour claim the damage was all done before they arrived. Not only do they make a practice of not removing trees and hedgerows, but they planted 30,000 new trees last year alone. James points to a new young woodland: "All proper trees, oak, ash, hazel, field alder, hawthorn and so on, none of your wretched conifers."

The key to conservation, Robin insists, is profitability. "There's no way you can do a Capability Brown unless you can afford it. James is a farmer who isn't making money will simply be tempted to try to grow more and more grain wherever he can."

The road to profitability, however, is considerably less straight than the farm tracks of Cambridgeshire. Back in the 1970s Velocour was among the first to reject the plough as unnecessary: all that was needed, it was then said, was light tillage before direct drilling of the new seed.

It seemed like a good idea at the time, but after a decade Velocour has gone back to ploughing. It is also concerned about the size and weight of modern farm machinery, and next autumn James is determined to use nothing but tracked vehicles in order to minimize soil compaction. The company has also decided to abandon straw burning as antisocial. Robin expects that chopping and ploughing in the harvest residue will mean that a lot more nitrogen is needed for the next three or four years but that eventually, if the German experience is anything to go by, the soil structure will be improved.

Malton farm, which is nearly 700 acres, is run by two men, with extra casual help at harvest time. In winter the main tasks are machine maintenance and keeping the pigeons off the oilseed rape.

Tim Durrant, the manager, says the birds get used to the "gas guns", in which propane is ignited by batteries at timed intervals to make a bang. He thinks there is more future in radio-controlled model aircraft.

"They don't mind human beings gun on the ground. But when there's something up there buzzing around in the air with them, they don't know what's going on."

Now that really is innovative.

John Young

Family Life

Hints for reluctant yuletide hostesses

In the carefree days of my youth, before I learned to drive or had children, I used to look forward to Christmas. On the morning of Christmas Eve I would take a taxi to Liberty's, sweep through the emporium, buying silk scarves, cravats and key-rings, then out again to find another cab, pausing only for a large brandy in Verreys. I would ask the second cab driver to stop at the market where I would pick up a bird, a few pounds of sprouts and a sprig of mistletoe, and then I would go home.

It was always an expensive outing, but undertaken with a certain style, and I wish that the girl who sallied forth with only a large cheque-book in her handbag were alive today instead of the woman who is fretting about the fact that she hasn't yet bought a Christmas present, made a mince pie or sent out a single card.

It's the same every year,

about mid-November I nudge myself and swear to follow the Guides' motto to be prepared - then studiously ignore all the orange and red alerts that warn of the impending event.

It is partly because I genuinely object to what we all now accept with resignation - the horrendous over-commercialization of what should be a religious or family affair; and partly because, though I have no great affection for panic or deadlines, they are so much a part of my life that without the adrenalin that accompanies them, I feel no sense of urgency, like a spring without a coil or a houseman without a bleep.

Had I had my way, we would all be off to a hotel this Christmas - somewhere with deep pile carpets and interior-sprung mattresses, to an atmosphere that would envelop us with its hospitality and yuletide efficiency and where all the chefs would do the work.

But the family will have none of it. For them Christmas has to be all about making puddings and pies, dressing the tree, wrapping presents in secrecy and opening them noisily at dawn. They like their local singers, the bustle of friends crossing our threshold on Christmas morning bringing bottles and good cheer - and best of all the sight of me suggesting to the table bearing the golden goose: Christmas, they say year after year, would not be the same if we weren't at home.

I do have friends who manage to get away from it all - but they are, to man and woman, either rich or childless or both. Not for them the fingers scolded trying to peel the chestnuts to go with the sprouts (which only half the family likes anyway); or the in-laws who don't speak to each other but would be offended not to be asked; or the friend who hasn't a home to go to and decides to visit yours for a quick drink on Christmas morning and has to be put to bed (one of yours) very drunk, twelve hours later.

While sybaritic friends sit sipping Lowenbrau above some snowy piste, or sun themselves on a Caribbean beach, I - and thousands like me - will be doing my damndest to see that



those I love - and some that I don't - are having the Christmas of their lives; and wondering, as I do each year, whether it is worth all the effort and expense.

And provided nobody dies, slips a disc, sets light to the dog, has a massive row or crashes the car (all of which I have known to happen), I will of course conclude that it is.

Now I must make my list - and just in case any of you is as absent-minded or short-sighted as I will commit it to paper. Make list of everything I need from toilet rolls to tin foil. Get family to check and add to it. Plan to visit supermarket early one morning with two helpers, one to find boxes and carry same to car and one to cross off items as we go.

Save all cardboard boxes because dustbins are never big enough. Buy twice as much wrapping paper. Sellotape, butter and cream as I think I'll need. Buy half as many nuts and dates (I still have last year's).

Prepare and freeze mince pies, stuffings, sausage rolls and brandy butter.

Make note in diary to remove same from freezer the day before Christmas Eve. Get butcher to weigh turkey; goose so I'll know how long to cook it for and we won't sit down for dinner at 10pm on Christmas night. Buy half a dozen presents for

unexpected guests and a dozen extra cards plus stamps for friends we thought had forgotten us.

Make another list of all distant friends and family to telephone with seasonal greetings. Buy large bottle of Alka Seltzer, bottles of Vitamins B, C, E and Paracetamol - for those who didn't know when to stop.

Buy three times as many cigarettes as I otherwise would (all those who are trying to give up will make exceptions because it's Christmas and smoke mine).

Find out what time midnight mass really starts this year and allow as much time as I think I need to get there, park and find a seat that isn't behind a pillar.

Ensure there's plenty of soda - for drinks and to squirt on spillages. Decide now how much I'm going to spend on presents and exceed it only by half as much again.

Buy myself a little something to slip into on Christmas morning and allow as much time as I think I need to get to the car, either not fit or too good to risk ruining in my attempts to achieve a balance between being mother/wife/cook and hostess. Put this list in my diary for Monday morning so I won't forget I've made it.

Happy Christmas.

Judy Froshaug

Outings

Aged 10-17. Apply to the lectures' secretary for tickets.

DISCOVERY ROOM Science Museum, South Kensington, SW7 (589 3458). Mon until Jan 7, Mon-Sat 11.30am-4.15pm. Free. A selection of "hands on" experiments and demonstrations for children - and adults.

ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL The London Toy & Model Museum, 23 Crown Hill, W2 (262 7905). Tues-Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun 11am-5pm. Until Mar 31, 1984. Adults £1.50, children 50p. An exhibition celebrating the toy animal with nearly 1,000 on display

The Christmas Holiday Competition, open to all children under 18, invites them to make a model vehicle or passenger. Closing date Dec 31, entry forms from the museum.

LECTURE PROGRAMME FOR 12-18 YEAR OLDS The Royal College of Surgeons, 35-43 Lincoln Inn Fields, WC2 (405 3474). Thurs and Dec 29, 30, Jan 6, all at 3pm. Free. For older children interested in medicine and surgery, a programme of lectures on the following themes: The romances of surgery; Operations of the heart; You too can save a life now; The sixth former and medicine; Stories from skeletons. Each lecture will be preceded by a tour of the Human Museum. Apply in writing to Miss L. Napper, Surgical Training Office, at the above address.

Bridge

Fatal decision that dealt defeat

The all-American semi-final of the 1983 World Championships was a one-sided contest which the Aces won by 185 IMPs to 82.

The clash between Italy and France in the other semi-final was an entirely different matter, with the issue in doubt until the final board. After 64 boards, Italy led by 14 IMPs, but France regained 50 points on the next 16 boards to lead by 37 at the halfway stage. With only 48 boards to play, the French had snatched their advantage to 62 IMPs, and with Italy's star pair, Belladonna and Garozzo, lacking the fire of former years, it seemed that France would surely prevail.

But Italy, relying mostly on their tried strategy of Franco, De Falco, Lauria and Mosca, clawed back 59 points in the next 32 boards to leave the score 311, Italy 308, with one short session to play. They were still five points behind when they came to board 152.

Italy v France. Love all. Dealer South.

W Mosca N Soulet Lauria S Label
14 24 30 44 47
No 47 No 47
No

W Mosca N Soulet Lauria S Label
14 24 30 44 47
No 47 No 47
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W Mosca N Soulet Lauria S Label
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W Mosca N Soulet Lauria S Label
14 24 30 44 47
No 47 No 47
No

It seems to me that South (Lebel) must take the blame for missing the excellent slam. After all, North (Soulet) had cue bid both his opponents' suits, so Lebel could count 11 tricks with any spade finesse sure to succeed.

This was the Italian bidding:

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

1 A limited hand, usually based on clubs.

2 A relay to extract further information.

Cronier's final double promised one defensive trick. Now Corn had to decide whether his OK would produce the other. It didn't. Most critics blamed Corn. But no one likes to make a phantom sacrifice, and six hearts doubled would have cost at least 700. So Italy scored 1090 and gained 12 IMPs, to lead by 7 IMPs with eight boards to play.

The hand which undoubtedly decided the match was board 156.

North-South game. Dealer West.

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco N Cronier De Falco Corn
2NT (1) No 44/2 ANT (3)
18 N-022 A-3 S-0 P-05
Double No No No

W Franco

THE TIMES

FINANCE AND INDUSTRY

Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

A Crocker full of trouble for Midland

To judge from Crocker Bank's losses the end of Midland Bank's suffering is not yet in sight. Midland has had more than its share of misfortune, for example, Lord Armstrong's untimely death in 1980 was followed by an unsatisfactory and uncertain interregnum.

But two important strategic errors of the bank's own making have caused more serious problems than malign fate. Midland dillyed and dallied far too long before making a move into the United States, preferring correspondent banking and the consortium approach to the world's most important banking market.

It also opted for a stifling management structure: in Mr Stuart Graham and Mr Malcolm Wilcox the bank had two equally powerful chief general managers, whose energies seemed to be taken up more in opposing each other than in restoring the bank to something like its previous eminence.

Divide and rule may occasionally be a useful principle in structuring senior management but division without rule has nothing to commend it. The Midland board finally recognized its error and appointed Mr Geoffrey Taylor in 1982 as sole chief executive in succession to Mr Graham and Mr Wilcox.

The legacy they left him was not enviable and it will take a long time to sort out. Meanwhile, there is Crocker.

Thursday night's news from California that Crocker has moved into the red this year and will halve its dividend confirms some of the worst fears about the quality and performance of Midland's 57 per cent-owned subsidiary. Crocker is making a special \$107m charge to meet non-repayment of property and farming loans, which will mean a fourth-quarter loss of \$57m and a loss for 1983 of about \$10m.

Midland's profits as a result of Crocker's "prudence" will be cut by \$75m. Midland paid an average of \$67.4 (\$825m in total) for its Crocker shares: yesterday the price was \$23.5.

Midland's investment, which because it is so large and because it is in the United States, is crucial to the bank and its shareholders. As Midland, which completed the deal in January, was about the last in the line of foreign buyers of US banks, it was hardly in a position to buy the best.

Generally US banks are available only if they are poorly managed and/or they have exceptional difficulties with which they cannot cope. Crocker had built up heavy



Geoffrey Taylor: Legacy to sort out.

and vulnerable loan positions in Latin America. It had a deep commitment in real estate lending in California and, again in common with other US banks, it was running into a period of intensifying pressure on margins.

Flat corporate loan demand and, more significantly, deregulation of American banking, which has brought fierce and costly competition for deposits in the past 12 months, are making the going tough.

Midland's acquisition of Crocker is, therefore, a high cost and high risk venture. Banking in the United States for foreigners is not the easiest game in the world at the best of times. Moreover, Midland agreed to handicap itself at the start.

The Federal Reserve Board concurred with Crocker's insistence that it should be allowed to run its own affairs, without direction or interference from London.

Midland had virtually no warning of the huge provisions on property loans and appears to have been kept in the dark about the seriousness of the situation.

This is clearly now going to change. Two of Midland's main board directors are off to California to agree with Crocker's senior management "specific ways of improving performance and to determine future working relationships between Midland and Crocker".

The affair could scarcely have come at a worse time for Midland which has just begun to get profits moving ahead again and appeared to be coming to grips with some of its long-standing problems. It now has to start all-over again rebuilding its credibility. Yesterday Midland's shares fell 53p to 384p.

Rothschild buys maximum stake in Smith Brothers

By Wayne Liatoff

Rothschild Group, the holding company of merchant bank N M Rothschild, has reached agreement to buy a 29.9 per cent stake in Smith Brothers the London stockbrokers. The stake is the maximum permitted by the Stock Exchange.

Smith Brothers is the fourth largest firm of jobbers and specializes in gold shares with office in New York, Los Angeles and London. Rothschild is one of the five banks which fix the price of gold twice daily and is London's biggest bullion dealer.

The deal follows an agreement reached last month between S G Warburg, the merchant bank, and Alroy and Smithers, the stockbrokers, and put even more pressure on Wadd Durlacher, London's premier jobbing firm. It has had talks but as yet to decide a

partner. Leading merchant banks have been named as potential partners but National Westminster is still considered the front runner.

The flurry of activity by leading institutions and stockbrokers and jobbers, who act as wholesalers of shares to the brokers, arise from the restructuring taking place in the stock market.

Greater competition is expected, particularly if the single capacity role separating share wholesalers and retailers is abolished in favour of dual capacity.

Rothschild is paying a total £11.5m, subject to the approval of the regulatory authorities, the Stock Exchange Council, Bank of England and Smith Shareholders. It is paying 95p a share in cash for 900,000 new shares

and £5.65m for nominal 8.75 per cent unsecured loan stock 2000 at par for cash.

On that basis the bankers have paid five times earnings, plus a modest premium. Smith Brothers shares were trading at 88p before the announcement having improved from 38p during the year.

The bankers cannot take up more of the Smith Brothers equity but intend forming an international dealing subsidiary next April when Stock Exchange rules permit.

Rothschild has interests in Australia, Hongkong, Singapore, America and Europe, mainly in Zurich. It is attracted by Smith Brothers' wholesale dealing expertise which the bank will exploit for international business. Smith Brothers' New York

business will be incorporated into a subsidiary 51 per cent owned by Rothschild, 49 per cent by Smiths. The offshoot will be capitalized at £10m, half of which will be paid for by Smith.

Exploratory talks began a few weeks ago; formal discussions completed the deal this week. Both sides admit having spoken to other groups but the synergy between us was so obvious that the agreement was almost a foregone conclusion, said Mr Tony Lewis, Smith chairman.

Recently Mr Jacob Rothschild's RIT & Northern financial services group revealed a 7.73 per cent stake in Smith.

The other major Smith shareholder is Finance for Industry which holds loan stock when converted, equivalent to 18 per cent.

£6m part bid for Maynards

By Jonathan Clare

Mr Lewis Carter, the entrepreneur who built Carter Superfoods out of a butcher's delivery round, is back in Britain and has made a surprise partial bid for Maynards, the confectionery and toy chain.

Mr Carter launched his 250p-a-share bid late yesterday after talks with the Maynards directors broke down. He wants to take control of 51.3 per cent with the balance to remain in the hands of existing shareholders, mainly the big institutions.

The aim, if he is successful, is to expand Maynards 72-shop toy retailing arm into a 300-strong chain with the confectionery manufacturing and retailing divisions sold off to their managers.

Mr Carter qualified as a butcher in 1964 when he was 18 and quickly appreciated the potential of providing low price food for people with frugal tastes. He returned to Britain in 1979 for £20m. He moved to Florida and the property market. He returned to Britain in August and approached the Maynards board on Thursday.

Mr Carter said: "We never discussed price. I think they'll talk, but it all came as a bit of a shock."

The toy shops trade under the Zodiack name and are mainly distributed close to the motorway system but with no outlets in the South. He believes there is scope for 300 branches and said that 200 within five years was a reasonable target.

The offer is 250p cash for each Maynards share and £1 for each preference share which values the group at £12.2m and the stake he wants at £6.3m. Three-quarters of the shares are in institutional hands.

£58m loss at British Shipbuilders

By Edward Townsend

British Shipbuilders, which is threatened with a national shipyard strike next month, confirmed yesterday that its losses for the half year to September 30 totalled £58m.

The corporation, which has become the Government's most persistent nationalized industry headache, is set to record losses for the year of well over £100m. Last summer it announced 1982-83 losses of £123m and said that a further 9,000 jobs would be cut in the next two years.

The group continues to be hit by the world slump in merchant ship ordering and by the decline in offshore work.

Several yards already face closure and Mr Graham Day, the chairman, has warned workers who plan to strike over the corporation's £7-a-week productivity deal that more job cuts might be necessary. The effect of a strike on customer confidence would be devastating, he says.

The corporation is making no new offer to avert the strike and is hoping that a ballot by the boilermakers' union will show workers to be against a stoppage.

Charterhouse is forecasting that pretax profits this year will not be less than £9.5m (against £9.8m last year). The post-tax figure could be substantially higher, however, thanks to the rationalization of its tax position as a result of its two recent big deals, Mr Anthony Craven-Walker, the managing director, said yesterday.

Mr Roy Danzig, finance director of Britoil, the oil company that was privatized last November, is leaving the corporation to devote more time to his family business. He will be succeeded by Mr Bob Speirs.

London Brick to lobby OFT

By Jeremy Warner

London Brick is expected to lobby the Office of Fair Trading next week in an attempt to have an unwanted £170m cash bid from Hanson Trust referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

It believes there is "strong possibility" of its case being accepted by the OFT which has confirmed that it will be taking a close look at the takeover bid.

London Brick is Britain's sole producer of cheap fletton housebuilding bricks while Hanson has about 20 per cent of the non-fletton facing brick market through its Butterley Building Materials offshoot.

London Brick last summer won clearance from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to make a takeover bid for Ibstock Johnson, another leading producer of non-fletton bricks, but decided against proceeding. The finding of the commission have encour-

aged Hanson into believing that an alternative merger between Butterley and London Brick will also be allowed to go ahead without government interference.

But this view was being challenged yesterday. One reason why London Brick was given clearance by the commission was because it was found to have exercised its fletton monopoly responsibly. Mr Jeremy Rowe its chairman, pointed out. The commission also went to considerable lengths to make clear that other mergers in the brick industry might not be viewed as favourably.

Mr Rowe said that since publication of the commission's report in August, the company has expanded its presence in non-fletton bricks fivefold though a combination of acquisition and green field develop-

Hanson Trust's bid formally rejected by London Brick yesterday, "wholly inadvisable, completely unacceptable and not in the interests of shareholders, employees or customers."

London Brick's share price jumped 31p to 136p in the market - way ahead of Hanson's bid - and a number of alternative mergers for the group were being mentioned by stockbroking analysts. These included a defensive merger with Sietley, itself the subject of an unwanted £115m takeover bid from Fipworth Ceramic which is before the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Tarmac has emerged as the mystery suitor for Francis Parker, the building materials and property development group, with an agreed bid worth £16m. It is offering 50p in cash for each share.

Public sector borrowing up sharply

By Peter Wilson-Smith, Banking Correspondent

Public sector borrowing rose sharply in November, bringing the total to £8.8 billion in the first eight months of the financial year. This is £3 billion higher than at the corresponding time last year but Whitehall officials pointed out yesterday that there were many special factors and the Treasury is still confident that the Chancellor's latest forecast will be met.

In the autumn Mr Nigel

Lawson raised the Government's forecast for the public sector borrowing requirement (PSBR) - the difference between what the public sector spends and what it produces in taxes - from £8.2 billion to £10 billion.

The November borrowing requirement of £1,671 billion compared with £67m the previous month and £880m in November last year.

The figures show department-

tal spending rising at 9.8 per cent, still well above the 5.4 per cent forecast in the last budget. Several factors, including EEC payments, are said to have swollen the figures, and officials put the underlying rise at about 8 per cent.

The latest figures, however, may lead some to take more seriously the Chancellor's warning last month that taxes could have to rise next year.

Secrets of a Telecom engineer

If you want some plumbing done, say, British Telecom engineers can usually oblige. They cannot be accused of moonlighting because, in my experience, the work is done in daylight when ordinary people are trying to get through to British Telecom to find out why they cannot have a telephone installed without waiting weeks. But I am not in the market at the moment, for water pipes or bathroom fixtures. However, I would like a Prestel unit.

As you may know, you cannot have a prestel unit until BT's engineers have put in the appropriate jack. They insist on a jack monopoly, although it is simple to install. Four weeks ago my Prestel equipment supplier informed BT. Three and a half weeks later nothing had happened; or it seemed nothing had happened. In fact BT engineers arrived at the door on Wednesday, but as no one was in, they went away without even disturb-

ing the letter box with a visiting card. They had, I was told by the supplier, "made an appointment for that day and had now made another appointment in January." But I protested, they had made no such appointment with me. "No, not with you; they make an internal appointment with themselves."

It seems to me that, with a bit of luck, BT engineers can go on for ever making internal appointments which, because the customer is not let into the secret, will be kept by them alone. Of course, no jack will be installed, no Prestel unit delivered.

I hope that is not what Sir George has in mind even if the privatization of BT merely substitutes a private for a public sector monopoly. Perhaps a smidgen of the £8m earmarked for marketing BT shares next year could be put into making the internal appointment system at least partially external? Who knows, it might be Prestel's salvation.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Tootal sells £20m stake in Australia

The Tootal Group has agreed to sell its stake in the Australian Bradmill Industries for £20.1m to Entrand, the Australian public company that was party to the failed bid for Courtauld's Australian subsidiary, Courtauld Hilton.

A £23.6m deal to sell Tootal's 49.9 per cent holding in Bradmill to another Australian company, Bruck (Australia), was blocked by the Australian National Companies and Securities Commission in July 1982.

Tootal shares closed up 2p at 39½p yesterday.

● Mr John Harvey-Jones, chairman of ICI has joined the board of Grand Metropolitan as a non-executive director.

INTEREST RATES

Domestic rates:
Bank base rates 9
Finance houses base rate 9½
Discount market loans week fixed 8½
3 month interbank 9½-9½
Euro-currency rates:
3 month dollar 10½-10½
3 month DM 8½-6½
3 month FF 14-13½
US rates:
Bank prime rate 11.00
Fed funds 9½
Treasury long bond 100-100½
ECGD Fixed Rate Sterling
Export Finance Scheme IV
Average reference rate for interest period November 2 to December 6, 1983 inclusive: 9.350 per cent.

City and industry urged to share export tip-offs

By John Lawless

A secretariat based on the Confederation of British Industry to swap export sales leads between manufacturers, City bankers and consultants was proposed yesterday in a report sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The report, called *Success in Invisibles*, says: "This move will, at last, bring the three most important sectors of our economy - industry, the City and the professions - right into the forefront of attempts to link modern information technology to dynamic marketing."

"The rewards could be huge and would put Britain years ahead of its competitors."

The report, by Mr Andrew Tessler of ITI Research, also asks the City institutions not to be so secretive with the early warnings of foreign business they get.

Success in *Invisibles* is available from ITI Research, Silverwood, Park Copse, Dorking, Surrey RH5 4BL, prices £20.

● The Committee on Invisible Exports yesterday changed its name to the British Invisible Exports Council (BIE). It also announced that Lord Limerick, former chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, is to head a new overseas promotion committee.

Charterhouse Petroleum confirmed its reputation as one of the fastest growing and most ambitious of the smaller British oil companies yesterday with a £47m acquisition, which it coupled with a £38.7m rights issue.

The acquisition involves Charterhouse buying oil and gas interests in the United Kingdom, Holland, Ireland and Egypt from Fluor, the United States petrochemical company. Of the \$66m total purchase price, \$45.7m is going on North Sea and onshore assets in this country.

They include a 12.7 per cent interest in the Buchan field in the North Sea and a 12.6 per cent interest in the Humble Grove field near Basingstoke in

Hampshire, which is scheduled to begin production in 1985. The deal involves two other onshore oil discoveries, eight North Sea licences and a spread of acreage in southern England.

The other sizable element of the deal is \$20.1m which Charterhouse is spending on a small stake in a proven gas field and a potentially commercial oil discovery in The Netherlands' offshore waters.

Yesterday's announcement follows hard on the heels of the company's decision to spend £37.5m on buying a 1.25 per cent stake in BP's Forties field in the recent auction. The two deals will give a significant boost to Charterhouse's assets, reserves and a cash flow, but will also - as with several other

recent North Sea deals - help to rationalize the company's tax position.

Charterhouse is forecasting that pretax profits this year will not be less than £9.5m (against £9.8m last year). The post-tax figure could be substantially higher, however, thanks to the rationalization of its tax position as a result of its two recent big deals, Mr Anthony Craven-Walker, the managing director, said yesterday.

● Mr Roy Danzig, finance director of Britoil, the oil company that was privatized last November, is leaving the corporation to devote more time to his family business. He will be succeeded by Mr Bob Speirs.

Pound loses 85 points

Sterling ended the day at a new closing low against the dollar of \$1.4140, a drop of 85 points, as the US currency surged ahead again on the foreign exchange markets.

Markets remain convinced that the underlying trend for the dollar is upwards. Demand was strong yesterday ahead of last night's US money supply figures. The dollar closed just over 1 pfennig higher against the Deutsch mark at DM 2.777.

Sterling's trade-weighted value slipped 0.1 to 81.9 and the pound was slightly weaker against European and other leading currencies.

STOCK EXCHANGES

FT Index: 759.3 up 6.5
FT 100: 82.34 up 0.08
FT All Share: 462.48 down 1.17
Bargains: 22,511
Datastream USM Leaders Index: 54.94 down 0.23
New York: Dow Jones Industrial Average (latest) 1236.59 down 0.20
Tokyo: Nikkei Dow Jones Index 9,530.61 up 68.18
Hongkong: Hang Seng Index 880.77 down 9.11
Amsterdam: 155.4 up 0.6
Sydney: AO Index 754.7 down 0.7
Frankfurt: Commerzbank Index 1007.9 down 2.0
Brussels: General Index 133.52 unchanged
Paris: CAC Index 148.6 down 0.9
Zurich: SKA General 306.90 unchanged

CURRENCIES

LONDON CLOSE

Sterling
\$1.4140 down 85pts
Index 81.9 down 0.1
DM 3.8300 down 0.0100
FF 11.9850 down 0.0200
Yen 333.50 down 1.00
Dollar
Index 131.1 up 0.4
DM 2.7777 up 0.0107

NEW YORK LATEST

Sterling \$1.4165
Dollar DM 2.7765

INTERNATIONAL

ECU/A
SDR0.731990

GOLD

London fixed (per ounce):
am \$381.00 pm \$377.25
cmt \$373.50-374.25 (£264.00-264.50)

New York (close): \$374.25

Kruggerand (per coin):
\$385.00-386.50 (£272.00-273.00)

Sovereigns (new):
\$90.00-91.00 (£63.50-64.50)

*Excludes VAT

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FAMILY MONEY edited by Lorna Bourke

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Policy option

Investors with a maturing London Life endowment policy will now have the option of reinvesting the proceeds in a London Life unit-linked investment bond. This has the advantage of allowing taxpayers to take tax-free income by partial encashments of the bond. Though the proceeds of a conventional with-profits endowment are tax-free, most people need to reinvest the lump sum and any income generated by the reinvestment is subject to income tax at the taxpayer's highest rate - plus the investment income surcharge.

Loans link

Personal loans from Midland Bank are available to investors who keep a minimum of £100 in Nationwide Building Society's Flexaccount. This is a valuable service to Nationwide customers who do not have a bank account and would otherwise be forced to borrow under a hire purchase or other credit agreement at much higher rates of interest. Midland Bank charges between 18 and 19 per cent on personal loans depending on the term - not as cheap as an overdraft, but cheaper than most HP or credit card borrowing.

Tax surprise

Startling differentials in top rates of tax come to light in a new guide *Personal Taxes Around the World*, produced by the international accountants, Spicer Oppenheim. The trend towards wealth taxes is reflected in the fact that they now apply in nine of the 24 countries covered in the guide. The book complements the previous title in the series, *Corporate Taxes Around the World*, and is available from Spicer and Pegler, St Mary Axe House, 56-60 St Mary Axe, London EC3A 8BU, price £2.50.

Mortgage hope

Housebuyers having difficulty getting a mortgage should try Skipron Building Society, which announce this week that it has funds available to lend to members and non-members. It's general manager, Mr Terry Adams, said: "The society can not only look after the mortgage needs of our own members without delay, but we can also offer mortgage facilities - sometimes up to 95 per cent - to certain non-members who may be experiencing delays with other building societies."



Some insurance premiums can be discounted if more than one car is to be covered

Dearer motoring

Legal and General is increasing motor insurance premiums by 7 per cent. "But the company says: defending its price like a number of car groups have been reduced for rating purposes, and a whole series of discounts have been introduced".

Under the Private Car policy, up to 50 per cent reductions can be obtained for experienced drivers taking out a policy of their own for the first time and there are

discounts if more than one car is insured. But these discounts could be valuable if the initial premium is not competitive. A good way to check is to ring Automobile Association Insurance Services which will give you a quote on the telephone for insuring your car.

Incentives book

Small businesses needing to know how to get the most out of Government and local authority incentive schemes should

obtain a copy of Robson Rhodes, the accountants' latest publication, *Government Incentives and Assistance for Industry in the UK*, lists everything from youth employment subsidies to EEC loans and grants to the coal and steel industry. Did you know that interest-free loans are available to fishing cooperatives or that 15 man-days' unpaid consultancy can be obtained from the Design Council for engineering and industrial companies with design problems? It is all in the book. Perhaps the best part is the comprehensive list of names and addresses.

Chip chat

Help is at hand for the difficult business of choosing a computer. The Institute of Chartered Accountants has published a guide called *Making a Success of Microcomputing in your Business*. The book suggests sources of unbiased advice, and includes guidelines for a computer contract and a plan for assessing requirements. There is a glossary of technical terms - essential if you are one of those who believe computer programmes are knitting patterns. Dr David Jackson and Dr Sam Lucas,

the authors, are founder members of the Microcomputer Advisory Service at Manchester University. Ben Parnell is a consultant with the Small Firms Advisory Service at the Department of Industry. Copies of the guide are available price £5.45 from the Institute of Chartered Accountants, PO Box 433, Chartered Accountants Hall, Moorgate Place, London EC2P 2BJ.

Holiday credit

Holidaymakers who book a holiday through Intasun will be offered revolving credit facility from Boston Trust and Savings which allows them to borrow up to £5,000 at an annual rate of 23.8 per cent. This is slightly more expensive than credit card borrowing, and about 5 per cent higher than bank personal loans, but a useful facility for any one without a bank account. Mr Graham Telford, director of Boston Trust & Savings, said: "We expect many people will use the Boston Freedom Credit Account to help finance their next holiday". Borrowers will also get a chequebook, bankers card and monthly statements. Boston has 25 money centres countrywide, five of them in Debenhams department stores.

Mortgages

Home loans queues may disappear

Home loans will be easier to come by in the New Year and mortgage queues may disappear altogether. This will exert upward pressure on house prices so avoid delay if you are thinking of moving house. By April, the house you want could cost considerably more. The building societies need to attract about £700m a month to maintain present levels and last month's receipts of £570m meant the £700m ceiling had been exceeded each month since August.

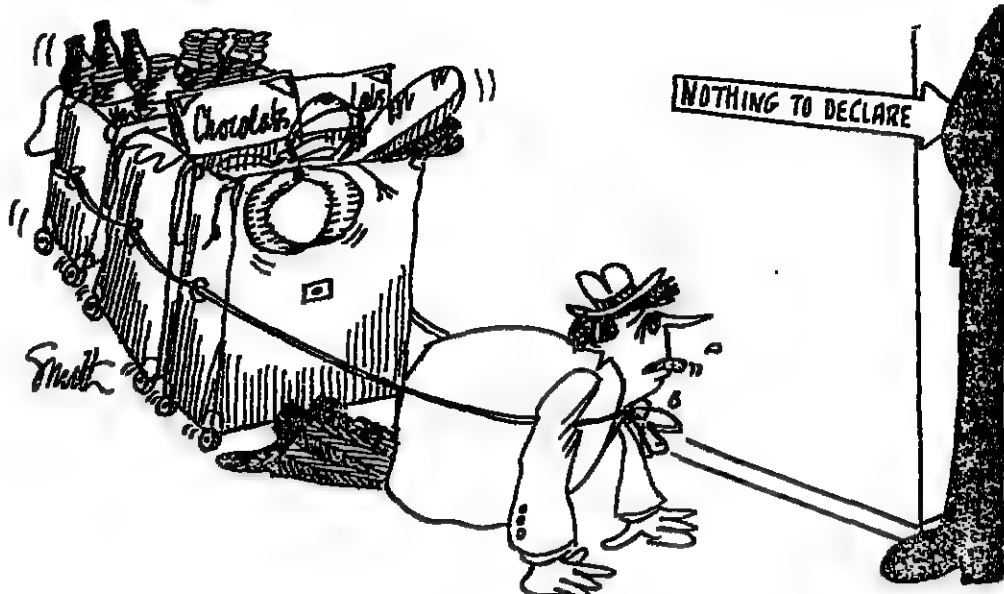
December is looking healthier and January is always a good month as interest is credited to investors' accounts.

Add to this the fact that the societies do not have a Building Societies Association Council meeting in January so no decision to cut rates can be made until February (unless a special meeting is called) and the likelihood is that the societies will be awash with money by March.

Most societies can provide a loan within four weeks during the summer it was 12. But because house owners with more than one building society account often approach several societies there is much duplication of applications.

Once money is available, the queues could disappear.

About the only dark patch on an otherwise bright horizon is that interest rates generally have hardened a little. During the New Year tax-gathering season, demand for money is higher than average and there could be further upward pressure on bank base rates.



Cross-Channel shopping

Preparation will help to unlock quayside value

There are only six cross-Channel shopping days to Christmas and already the men are in a panic. Spouses who would not be seen dead in their local supermarket seem to take to Continental shopping like ducks to water.

During a Press outing to Boulogne this week, one of my male colleagues left half a loaf of bread and a small bottle of wine in the back of his car. Another appeared festooned with Christmas tinsel: the decorations were much cheaper than at home.

The oddest spectacle of all was my own dear spouse - a teetotaler - scouring the hypermarket wine racks with enthusiasm. Even a dedicated non-drinker could hardly fail to appreciate that the best buys on the other side of the water are booze, booze, and more booze.

Basic wine in the hypermarket is a fraction of the price at home. But probably the best buys were five- and ten-litre plastic cans in a wine shop in Calais. They worked out at about 55p a litre (most bottles are three-quarters of a litre). You could taste it before you bought, then it was pumped into the can.

You can bring back up to seven litres of wine per person from France, provided you bring no other alcohol, or 50 litres of beer, which is less than half price at home.

In addition, you can buy up to £120 worth of other goodies. Table basics like olive oil and coffee are nearly half price.

Most of the popular French cheeses are cheaper than in Britain - but not all that much cheaper and they do not keep in the freezer. The paté I bought

Cross Channel Shopping Prices

	UK	France
Côte du Berger (bottle)	£2.00	58p
Olive Oil (1/2 litre)	£1.50	84p
Ground Coffee (1 lb)	£2.75	£1.50
Credou (1 lb)	£3.20	£2.11
Brie (1 lb)	£1.50	£1.20
Terme de Campagne	£1.28	£1.28

* 11.8 French francs to the £

was roughly the same price as in Britain, but much better quality. Pâtés do keep in the freezer. There is nothing to stop you bringing back some of the sumptuous French seafood, though the Customs men were not too certain about the live

lobsters crawling round the hypermarket's fish stall.

Bulk purchases are probably best made in the hypermarkets, but the smaller town-centre shops are better hunting grounds for the dedicated eater. I spent half an afternoon tasting cheese in Calais and munching free samples from the mouth-watering chocolate shops.

Plenty of hardware goes cheap as well - Le Creuset cookware, for instance, sells at between a third and a quarter less than in Britain. Perhaps brides should hang their wedding lists on the cross-Channel ferry.

Really keen shoppers do not have lunch before they start. Alcohol, I discovered, plays havoc with the calculator. You also tend to spend the best part of the afternoon searching for the paté or cheese you enjoyed so much at mid-day.

It is much easier to take your car across and only a little more expensive. The midweek return cost for four passengers and vehicle from Dover to Boulogne or Calais is £38 and only a little more at weekends. Passengers on foot pay £7.50.

Margaret Drummond

Insurance

Easy steps to cover a slip-up

The cold weather has arrived and betting has started on the chances of a white Christmas. But what happens if someone slips on the snow outside your house or on the garden path?

A Department of Transport spokesman said: "It's helpful if householders can assist by clearing the snow from the pavement in front of their houses. But many people worry about doing this in case passers-by slip on a cleared area, hurt themselves, and then sue the householder."

"Injured passers-by could only do this if they could successfully prove that the householder had been careless in snow clearing and created a new hazard, or made the pavement more dangerous than before."

This is none too reassuring. But provided you have normal household contents insurance cover there is no need to worry. Most household policies (both buildings and contents) contain third-party liability cover.

As an occupier, you would be covered under your contents policy for any successful damages claim arising out of un-cleared, or negligently cleared, snow on your paths or drives. Third-party liability cover is usually included as standard protection - very occasionally it is an optional extra. Check your policy.

Burst pipes can be a problem, too, particularly if you are planning on going away over Christmas leaving the house empty. Turn the water off at the mains and drain the pipes or you may come back to a flooded house. And remember to cancel milk and newspapers or you will be leaving an open invitation to thieves.

Estate duty
Play Santa Claus and cut capital transfer taxation

each this year under the annual exemption and £250 in separate gifts to any number of individuals.

Capital gains tax can also be relevant on gifted assets, although currently there is a £100 small gifts exemption (due to be repealed in 1984).

Grandparents and others may like to gift school fees. For example, for James aged 8 and Anne aged 3, a sum of £10,000 for each will purchase from Royal Insurance five years of higher education fees at almost £1,200 and £1,950 per school term, commencing September 1988 and September 1993 respectively. Any CTT saving

be helped in this way if they are not taxpayers.

It is important to be aware that income arising from any gifts made by parents to minor children will be assessed on the parents. It is therefore preferable to use non-income producing investments such as National Savings certificates, regular or single premium life policies or bonds.

Giving beyond your family, regular gifts under deeds of covenants to charities of up to £5,000 gross annually provide relief additionally against higher rates of income tax and investment income surcharge. Charitable covenants need run for only four years compared with seven years for other covenants.

Regular gifts out in income can also be exempt from CTT and those may be suitable for deeds of covenant which can give rise additionally to a saving of basic rate income tax.

But there is no tax saving on covenanted gifts to your own children, under the age of 18. Nephews, nieces and grandchildren of any age and your own children of 18 or above can

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FAMILY MONEY

Unit trust performance

The figures show the value on December 1 of £100 invested 12 months, and three years ago respectively, on an offer-to-offer price basis, net income reinvested. Figures supplied by *Planned Savings*.

FINANCIAL		F&C Capital		150.1	170.6
	12mths	36mths	Tyndall Spec Sits	150.0	204.4
Britannia Fin Socs	145.3	175.9	Tf1 & T2 Sml Cs	149.7	
Henderson Fin Socs	144.7	175.9	Trg Spec Sits	147.0	155.1
Prd Inv Fd In Tst	140.0	148.9	Hill Sml Spec Sits	146.3	200.5
J Finlay Inv Tst	143.9	185.9	Schrdr Spec Sits	145.7	
S & P S&Pobits	140.8	162.7	Prific Spec Sits	146.6	
Nat West Fin	140.6	182.8	Brown Ship Sits	145.3	120.1
Hill Samuel Fin	140.2	150.8	M&G Com Growth	144.0	149.5
Prd Inv Fd In Tst	137.3	175.0	OppnHm Spec Sits	144.7	128.3
Target Inv Tst	140.0	175.1	Fidly Spec Sits	142.9	183.5
S&P Inv Tst Units	139.9	168.2	NPI Growth	142.2	148.2
Prd Prop Shrs	138.5	127.7	M&G Com Growth	141.8	194.8
S&P Fin Socs	137.7	188.3	Mid & Lnd Cos	141.2	
Tyndall Fin & Prp	137.3	131.3	Brady Revy	140.3	154.0
S&P F&G Fd In Tst	136.7	165.1	Quantant Revy	139.7	150.0
Target Financial	136.6	166.8	Bshpge Pgrvss	139.1	191.9
Brown Ship Fin	135.4	134.4	Canon Growth	139.1	
Barclays Fin	135.4	134.5	Brlync Revy	138.5	191.6
K&G Inv Fd In Tst	132.0	162.0	Prd Growth	138.5	127.4
Prd Growth	132.0	162.0	Prd Growth	137.2	194.5
Arbuthn Fin & Prp	121.5	127.0	Garmure Brt	136.0	179.7
Holburn Glt	119.8		M&G Revy	135.8	144.4
Fin Con&Glt	118.5		Cwn Growth	135.6	
Canl Glt&Glt Invt	118.5		Hndson Revy	135.3	133.7
Allied Glt Growth	117.0		Prd Growth	133.7	172.1
Profit Glt Glt	116.3		Schrdr Gen	133.3	203.9
Hendson Fnd Invs	116.1		Vnrgd Spec Sits	133.4	183.8
S&P Inter&Bnd	115.9	158.1	M&G Cmpl Gnd	132.5	142.6
Abbey W Bnd	115.5	170.9	Hill Sml Invst	132.1	72.4
Eny&Law&Gt Fx In	115.3		Hill Sml Cpl	132.2	166.8
Britannia Glt	115.3	148.0	Brwn Ship Glt	131.9	161.9
Hill S Glt Growth	114.8		Brdge Capitl	131.7	146.3
Rowan Fnd Invt	114.7		Allied Tech	131.7	178.2
Gre Glt&Fnd Invs	114.7		Alloy Recovery	131.1	178.1
Carat Allen Glt	113.9	149.9	TSB Select Opport	130.8	
Manulife Glt&Fx In	113.8		GT Capital	130.7	182.9
Prd Glt&Fx In	113.3	143.3	Mid Bank Capital	129.2	154.2
Tgt Glt Inc	113.4	145.4	TSB General	129.1	166.6
Fidly Glt Fnd Invt	113.4	147.6	Prd Growth	128.0	168.0
Nelstar Glt Fx Invt	113.1		Brit Assets	128.6	163.8
Garmore Glt	113.1	144.5	Flamington Cap	128.4	178.5
Henderson Glt	113.0	130.4	MGM UK Growth	128.0	
Prd Glt&Fx In	112.5	144.2	Craughtmont Rcy	127.8	152.4
Mid Bk Glt Fx In	122.4	143.0	Prd Growth	127.7	168.0
Target Gilt Capital	111.9	143.2	Allied Accum	127.1	170.4
Belync Glt Inc	111.9	143.8	Brit Spec Mkt Sits	126.9	139.8
ABM Glt Fx In	111.9	137.8	Stewart Brt Cap	126.2	174.4
Prd Glt Fx In	111.8	150.8	Manulife Growth	125.7	152.0
Mercury Glt	111.7		Prd Growth Sits	125.7	210.0
Rowan High Invt	111.6		Nat West Cap	125.4	176.1
Barrington Gt Yd	111.4		Eny & Law UK Gth	124.7	
Prd Glt Fx In	111.1		Tyndall Capital	124.2	129.9
Allied Gov Sec	111.1	151.4	Barclays Capital	124.2	160.9
Tyndall Glt Fx In	110.7	141.1	Avrge Growth	124.1	
Garmore Fx Invt	110.3	143.7	Tynd Sml Com	124.1	149.7
S&P Glt & Fnd Invt	109.2	124.0	Cruscent Cap	123.3	154.3
Prd Growth	108.2	136.9	Vanquard Growth	122.3	149.3
			Chenda Prop Eqty	121.8	216.4
Tyndall PrfS	107.8	148.7	Royal Trust Cap	121.8	154.0
Target PrefS	106.0	155.4			
Britannia PrefS	104.8	123.4	Janet UK, SM Cx Rte	121.6	
Buchan PrefS	104.8	111.7	Garmore Cap	121.2	184.3
Chieftain Pf&G Sits	103.1	119.3	Archway Growth	121.2	
Key Fixed Int	100.8	149.5	Britt Cap Accum	121.0	132.3
Henderson P & G	104.8	135.4	S&P Spec Sits	120.6	

GROWTH

	12mths	36mths	Allied Overseas Earns	118.1	180.7
			Austin Friars Grth	117.2	
			Abbey Ass & Erths	116.5	
Prolific Tech	158.1		Garnier Spec Sols	115.6	128.3
HK Technology	153.9	188.8	HK Private	112.9	129.0
Brown Shiply Tech	152.4		Arbut Cap Grth	111.9	120.5
Brewin Capital	151.8		Hend Cap Grth	105.2	153.0

INCOME

	12mths 30/06/2019
Canon Income	168.4

M&C Income	148.8
M&O Mid & Gen	148.2
Schroder Inc	146.8
Crown High Inc	146.3
Nat West Ex Inc	143.0
W&A	143.0
M&P Dividend	141.6
Key Income	138.2
Eq & Low High Inc	137.9
Brown High Yield	137.8
Ridgeway Inc	137.5
S&P Scootyields	137.2
Brown Ship H Inc	137.1
Pearl Inc	137.0
L&L Income	136.9
M&G High Inc	136.8
Brown Shipley Inc	136.6
Tyndall S&P Inc	136.3
Midland Bk Inc	136.2
Alliance High Inc	136.1
Fifty Max Inc Ety	135.8
Frankington Ex Inc	135.5
W&A	135.4
MGIM High Inc	135.4
S&P High Yield	135.4
Henderson InebGTH	135.1
S&P High Yield Return	134.1
James Capital Inc	131.0
W&A High Inc	129.9
High Samuel Inc	133.7
TSB Inc	133.6
Royal Trust Inc	133.5
Mid Bk High Inc	133.4
W&A Mid End	133.0
New Court Inc	133.0
MG&X Ex Yield	132.5
IMACS Bk Income	132.5
Nat West Income	132.4
Nelstar High Income	132.1
W&A Bn High Inc	132.0
W&A High Yield Equity	131.9
Braman Nt High Inc	131.9
JOYS Bk Extra Inc	131.7
Canlitf Income	131.6
Ridgedale Income	131.5
Allied Equity Inc	131.5
W&A High Inc	129.3
Target Income	130.9
Profitic High Inc	130.9
Barrington High Inc	130.3
Henderson Ext. Inc	130.0
High Samuel High Inc	129.6
Aitken Fine Soc Inc	129.3
W&A High Inc	129.3
Garratt Income Inc	129.3
Britannia Inc & Gth	129.1
Arbuthnot High Inc	128.0
Perpetual Income	127.9
Target Ex Income	127.6
S&P Income	127.6
W&A High Div	127.6
Henderson High Inc	127.3
Confia Inc & Gth	127.3
Opheia Int. & Gth	127.1
Canady Delphi Inc	127.1
Barratya Inc	126.1
Int Yr Monthly	126.1
Presnet Bk & Inc	125.8
W&A High Inc	125.6
Allied High Yield	125.3
Wickford Dividend	125.3
High Dist	125.3
Garratt Extra Inc	125.0
GT Income	124.6
Mayflower Income	124.2
W&A High Inc	121.9
Britannia Ex Inc	121.9
Arbuthnot High Yld	121.8
Janis Finly High Inc	121.5
Suckman Cumberland	121.1
Dawson Lawrie Inc	119.8
W&A High Inc	118.7
W&A High Inc	118.7

an High Inc 117.

6mths	Lawson High Yield	114.
	Craigmount High In	113.

179.3	HK Income	106.9
188.9	HK Extra Income	99.9
200.5	Schrd Srml Cos	150.0
	Frimling Rvry	149.0
	Leo Medlin	148.0
	Leo Capital	147.0
182.6	Bearycapinc Gen	146.2
195.8	Mencap	139.0
	Archway	137.0
187.6	Brit Smll Cos	137.0
152.0	Arbuthn Smll Cos	136.0
181.0	Minister	136.0
167.3	Family Fund	135.0
186.3	Brit Smll	134.0
178.9	Brn Shply Ind	134.0
179.3	Brngsmr Cnd	133.0
187.7		133.0
184.0	Alded Blanced	133.0
194.0	MG Smll Cos	133.0
194.0	Hil Smll Br	133.0
163.8	MG Smll Cos	132.0
193.9	Bckmstr Smllr Cos	132.0
	M&G Gen	132.0
	M&G Trusce	132.0
175.0	Ryl Lond and Ac	131.0
215.1	Hil Sam Sec	131.0
	T&G Colco	131.0
180.4	Pelican	131.0
170.8	Pearl Trus	131.0
186.3	Wickmoor	130.0
156.9	Nt Wat Frnto	130.0
206.8	Trds Unnt Unit	130.0
175.7		130.0
175.3	MG Gen	130.0
169.8	Hil Saml Smll Cos	130.0
170.2	S&P Uk Equity	130.0
177.6	Ahed Frnt	130.0
153.6	HK Smll Compsns	129.0
204.0	MLA	129.0
175.7	Baurin Gen	128.0
173.1	Target Ety	128.0
173.8	Brinnamu Dom	128.0
173.8	Equity & Lw Gen	127.0
173.5	Nelsur Un Grp	127.0
145.9	Northwch Un Grp	127.0
188.1	Alf Lond and Ac	126.0
186.1	Reliance Brn Trst	126.0
190.0	Prudential	126.0
192.6	Baryclayst Inv	126.0
193.0	Pegasus Equity	125.0
163.0	Gt Tech & Growth	125.0
172.2	Electra Smll Cos	125.0
151.6	Quadrant General	125.0
188.8	Alf Lond and Ac	125.0
188.3	Confid Growth	125.0
180.6	Canlie General	125.0
144.5	New Crt Smll C	124.0
203.7	Standard Life Eq	124.0
183.7	Scotish Eq Unit	124.0
189.8	Bown Securities	124.0
179.2	Brngsmr Cnd	124.0
179.2	B&G Barbican	124.0
142.2	McAnally Glen	123.0
142.4	Tyndall Int Earnings	123.0
152	Equitas	123.0
	Hend's Son In & As	122.0
166.9	Barclayn Pro As	122.0
161.7	Barclayn Trus	122.0
161.7	Alded Smllr Cos	122.0
166.2	Vanguard Trusce	121.0
175.8	Nt West Sm Cos	121.0
152.8	Mercury General	121.0
	Knwrt B UK Eq	121.0
149.7	Barclaycme '900'	121.0
167.7	Bucknham Gen	121.0
166.8	Barclaycme Hum & I	121.0
166.8	Allied Sec Sm Cos	120.0
163.9	Flelding Fund	120.0
151.0	G and A	120.0
143.2	Lloyds Bt Bal'd	120.0
142.5	Allied & Gen	119.0
142.5	Abbey General	119.0
142.5	Lloyds Life Equity	119.0

	119.3
Blue Chip	118.6

2	131.8	Airt Hume Sp Sits	118.6
2	117.2	Mummy Sm Gas	117.7

3	117.2	Murray Sm Cos	117.7
3	112.0	Shoemaker	112.0
6	245.9	S&P Int'l Shares	116.6
3		Allied Capital	116.6
8	157.4	Robert Fraser	115.2
5	226.7	College Hill	114.8
9	196.8	Friars House	114.8
7		Kinwrt Bsm Sm Cos	114.7
8	149.6	Reliance	114.7
6	238.4	Key Equity & Genl	114.0
7	256.7	Mayflow & General	113.4
0	196.8	Discretionary	112.9
0	172.7	Aiuk Hume Sm Cos	112.2
2	182.2	HK Macken Leaders	111.5
3	157.8	Chieftain Sm Cos	108.0
5	120.9		
1	210.3		
0	168.3		
8	164.7		
6			
5	164.9	Gt European	124.4
4	173.5	Abbey Japan	192.0
7		Fidelity Japan	190.6
7	163.6	Henderson Erpan	180.0
5	168.4	Oppen Int'l Grth	179.9
4	192.6	Crescent Tokyo	176.5
4	178.0	Barrington Erpan	171.0
9	153.5	TSB Japan	170.3
7	158.6	HK Japan	169.0
6	165.8	M&G Jpn & Gnl	166.7
5	153.3	F&C Far East	165.8
1	174.1	Hindn Psm Cos	164.9
1		Hill Sm Erpan	164.4
0	168.4	Tyndall Far East	163.4
0	155.6	Mdl Bk Jpn & Pn	163.1
3	197.4	Britn Jpn Perf	162.0
2	257.6	Henderson Japan	158.1
1	150.0	Proflc Far East	158.0
4	153.9	New Crt America	157.5
7	177.1	Gt Far E & Gnl	157.5
1	139.4	Allied Japan	156.6
0	190.9	Arbuthn Et & Int	156.5
9	172.5	Hndn Amer Recy	155.6
7	170.7	Schroder Tokyo	155.0
3	162.5	Brown Shpg	153.8
2	172.4	Darnt Ttl Perf	153.8
9		Stewart Eurpn	153.4
8		Ridgely Int	153.3
4	200.7	Barrington Pac	153.3
4	186.3	Schroder Aus	153.1
4		Gt Japan & Genl	153.0
4	162.4	M&G Aus & Gnl	153.0
4	161.3	S&P Japan Growth	150.1
7	187.2	S&P Select Int	152.2
8		Arbnt Forn Grth	151.9
5	168.9	Barclay Aus	151.7
1		M&G Amcn Revy	150.9
1	160.1	Target US Sp Bnd	150.7
0	134.0	GT US & General	150.7
3	150.7	Schroder Europe	150.1
3	140.2	S&P Japan Growth	150.1
8	153.8	Tyndall Int'l Grth	149.9
4	149.6	Hendrsa Gbl Tch	149.9
4	143.5	HK F East & Gen	148.9
2	179.7	Targt Maly & Sing	148.3
9	161.9	S&P New Techy	148.1
1	162.3	Brucynic Gr Pcf	147.6
0	214.9	Murray European	147.2
0	199.8	Gaytime Intl	147.0
0	158.0	Garrime Gblt Srt	146.8
0	178.2	Allied Am Sp Sits	146.6
4	121.8	Equity Low Pfast	146.6
4	121.1	Llyds Bk Pof Bsm	146.2
6	178.3	Hill Samuel F East	146.1
4		Schrd Sing & Maly	146.0
3	164.7	NPI Overseas	145.9
0	172.9	Allied Pacific	144.8
0			
0	169.0	Britania Wd Grth	144.5
4	160.2	Prolific Intl	144.4

OVERSEAS

	Chilmark Far East	139.4	177.4
	Allied Secs of Am	139.4	200.6
36mths	Bridges Inc Bco	130.3	174.4

	Bridge Intl Rm	139.7	177.9
	Perm World Rec	139.7	177.9
	Hend Am Sm Cos	139.7	220.1
234.6	Hk American	139.0	164.4
	Stewart American	137.8	216.5
291.9	Martin Curran	137.7	172.2
338.3	Wm H. Ladd	137.6	105.1
242.4	Govett Euro Grth	137.5	130.6
	Bill Samuel Intl	137.5	197.7
	Allied Intl Intl	137.2	160.0
239.7	Lloyds Bk N Am	137.1	184.6
	Can & Foreign Int	137.1	
171.9	Mid Bk N Am	136.8	185.5
	Nefstar Intl	136.2	186.8
209.3	Henderson Austr	135.7	187.4
235.2	Chieftain Amer	135.7	186.8
208.2	Fidelity Nat Am	135.2	156.2
256.4	Tyndall N Amer	135.0	202.9
243.1	Gt International	135.0	169.9
	Barclaybank Am	135.0	170.7
	Bunzlamer Mart	134.8	161.8
213.1	Target Am Eagle	134.8	189.1
157.5	Schroder Intl	134.6	199.9
	Aitken Hume Pac	134.6	
	Hill Samuel Ltd	134.6	175.3
19.2	Tara Wadco Can	134.5	145.8
198.5	Franklaming Am	134.3	244.4
	Crescent Internatl	134.3	163.6
171.9	J Capel N Am	134.3	203.1
	Lloyds Bk Amer	134.0	173.3
158.5	Janine Finlay Int	134.0	166.8
300.7	Proffitt N Amer	133.7	
	Mercury Internatl	133.4	149.9
	Brown Ship Intl	133.4	173.9
247.1	Albany Amer Grth	132.9	176.6
68.4	Groff Intl	132.8	108.8
	MSG Fr Estrn Grth	132.5	126.6
169.1	TSB Amrcn	132.5	
243.1	Nl Wst Nth Amcn	131.4	142.2
92.3	Bmgnt Nth Amcn	131.4	200.0
239.3	Ozint Intl	131.0	181.7
	Chftn Amer	131.0	
294.7	Hdts Nth Amcn	130.7	211.8
	World Wide	130.3	146.6
24.1	Rowan America	129.9	199.9
213.2	Schroder Intl	129.4	
	Brit Amr Sml Cos	129.2	
143.0	Brm Amr Sml Cos	129.1	206.8
	Myflwr Intl	128.3	164.8
	Brm Amr Sps Intl	127.9	162.2
	Abdnt Nth Amcn	127.9	182.5
141.5	Intl	127.9	174.7
	M & G Exrn & Gnl	127.2	125.6
150.2	Crgmnt Nth Am	127.0	144.3
	Bk Irind Brt Ovns	124.8	
	Fidng Intl	124.7	157.7
	Chftn Grl Rcvy	124.7	
	Brm Amrn Grth	123.9	179.1
259.8	Crescent Amrn	122.8	136.2
	Mrry Amrcn	121.0	
	Brm Intl Grth	121.0	115.1
188.7	Stech Intl	121.0	151.9
167.3	Brds Amern Gen	118.3	135.8
	Wielr Grth	118.2	134.7
17.2	Bckmn Intl Cptl	113.9	

House Buyers Bill

Lawyers aim to get in on the Act

The surprise success yesterday of Mr Austin Mitchell's House Buyers Bill means it now goes to committee stage where it is generally thought the Government will do its best to kill it off, even though it will be reluctant to ignore the powerful solicitors' lobby.

Mr. Edwin Lee, of William Heath & Co., the solicitors, suggest that if building societies and others are allowed to handle conveyancing, the solicitors should consider having their own building societies. He believes the building societies and banks will want to offer a conveyancing service and that solicitors should be looking at ways to compete.

Solicitors, he says, should have their own building societies to handle the conveyancing, paying the equipment, and the building societies would be able to tap into the contractor on the office terminal to be printed almost immediately or the printer at the offices of the purchaser's solicitor.

The purchaser's solicitor could then send his preliminary inquiries, requisitions or his office terminal to be printed likewise almost immediately or the printer at the offices of the vendor's solicitor.

Mr. Lee suggested that

Mr Lee says: "The Ecological Building Society recently emerged as an alternative lending institution and there is

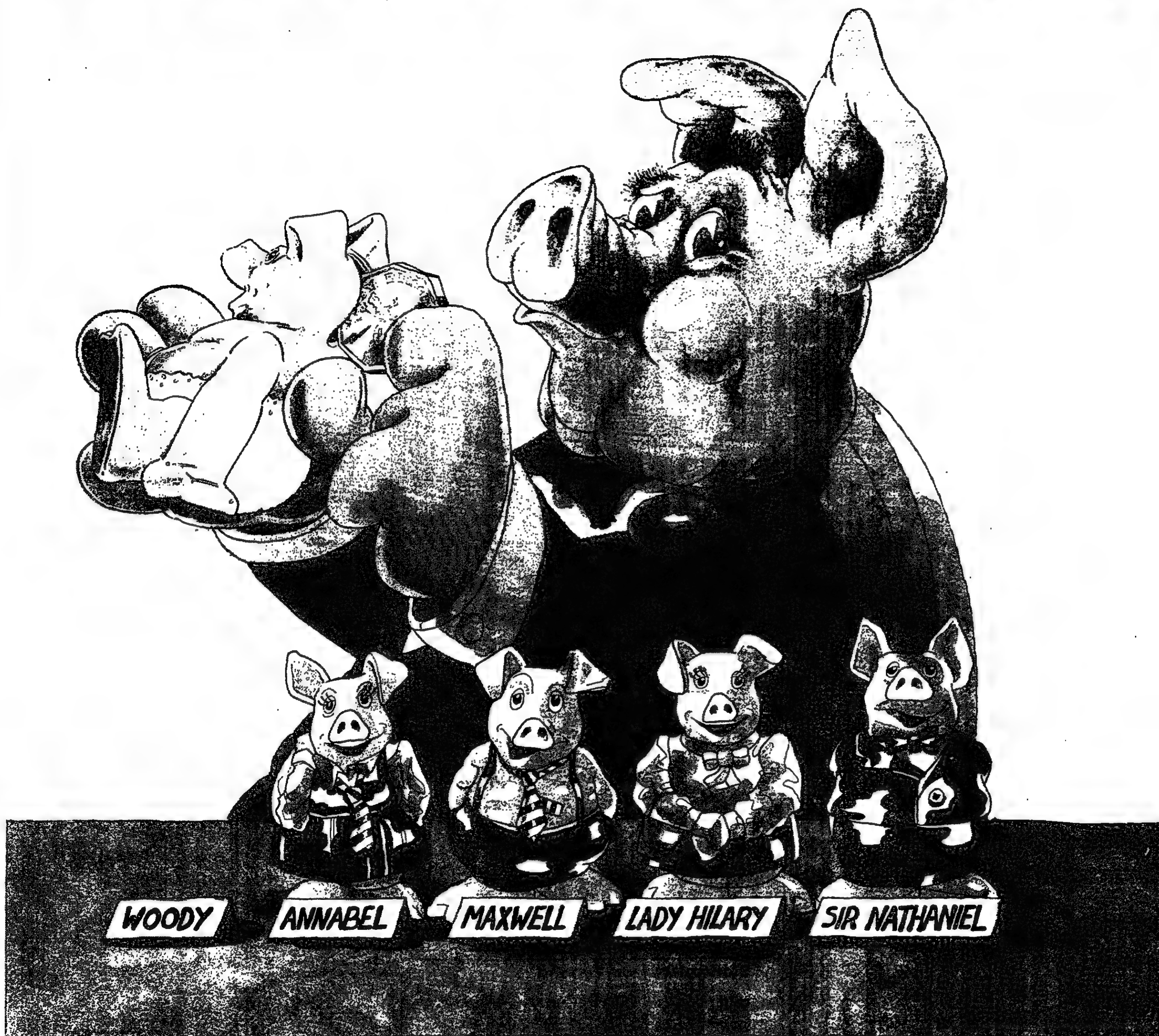
He envisages a head office, preferably in a low-cost area such as Corby, in Northamptonshire, where subsidies are available for offices, equipment and personnel. This would

"This would in turn be linked to computers installed or about to be installed at all the offices throughout the country. At the end of the transaction the vendor's title would be stored on the headquarters computer. This would remove the need for much of today's expensive typing, telephoning,

Mr Lee believes that organizations in a low-cost area benefit from high technology, should ensue a drastically lower overhead than the big building societies with their many branches or expensive sites, regional centres and headquarters with an arm of personnel.

[illegible]

AND THE FIRST LITTLE PIGGY WENT HOME.



The NatWest Piggy Bank is an exciting new saving scheme for younger children, designed around a family of beautiful porcelain pigs.

It works like this.

£3 opens a Piggy Bank Account, of which £1 covers membership. This includes a delightful "Woody Westminster" piggy bank and a saving pack.

The pack contains everything your child will need to run a NatWest Piggy Bank Account; membership card, paying-in book, wallet, explanatory brochure, account record book, Woody's Wobbly wall chart and painting crayons.

At the regular statement despatch dates in July and January, provided enough has been saved, the young NatWest Piggy Banker will receive the next piggy in the family absolutely free.

First, Woody's sister Annabel when the balance reaches £25, then elder brother Maxwell at £50, and mother and father - Lady Hilary and Sir Nathaniel - at £75 and £100 respectively.

Interest is paid twice a year in June and December initially at 5½%. Unlike the Building Societies, the NatWest Piggy Bank pays interest without deducting income tax.

The Piggy Bank is no ordinary saving scheme. The fun of collecting all five piggies provides a series of goals which will positively encourage your child to save.

For full details, trotter long to the Piggy Bank today.



NatWest
The Action Bank
National Westminster Bank PLC 41 Lothbury, London EC2P 2BP

Legality test for EEC budget

From Ian Murray
Brussels

The 1984 EEC budget, which was passed by the European Parliament on Thursday, is to be studied by the Community foreign ministers here on Monday. They will be considering whether or not it is legal.

The budget was given its second reading by Parliament in the face of total opposition by British MEPs, who were furious because agreed rebates worth £457m to Britain were put into a special frozen category and can only be released by a further vote of Parliament.

But the Council of Ministers is not looking at the budget at Britain's behest. It has noted at least four legal points, which it believes could be challenged before the European Court, and there is a growing mood in member countries that Parliament must be made to keep the rules. It is doubtful, however, whether the Greek presidency, after the failure of the Athens summit, has any stomach for a fight within a fortnight of handing over the chair to France.

One point does involve the British cash. Parliament has reclassified this from being compulsory spending - as laid down by the Council - to non-compulsory spending, which alone can be controlled by the Parliament. Making this change made it possible for the money to be frozen.

But senior EEC diplomats, who met late in Brussels after Parliament's vote, were worried about other points, notably the way in which Parliament had arbitrarily increased the amount of revenue for the budget beyond the limits which the Council believed are legally permissible.

If the Council wants to challenge what Parliament has done it will have to act quickly on Monday because the following day Mr Piet Dankert, the president of the Parliament, intends to adopt it. Once that legal formality is completed the Commission can then implement the budget whatever the Council may say.

EEC power struggle, page 6



Lights out: A hat-trick of Santas lining up to greet non-smokers on the steam journey. (Photograph: Herbie Knott).

Steaming to Santa

The six-mile Watercress Line steam railway, which runs between Arleford and Four Marks in Hampshire, is running a service of Santa Specials this weekend.

The £2.25 fare on the Santa steam-hauled specials includes sherry for adults and presents for children when they reach Santa's Grotto at Four Marks station.

Judge orders Whitehall 'mole' unmasked

Continued from page 1

sources and has been blown utterly apart.

"Anyone who knows Whitehall knows that documents stamped secret even to the office loo paper, and it now seems that if a document is Crown property, which applies to 60 or 70 per cent of leaks, then you are automatically bound to return it."

He said that the newspaper had not destroyed the document or defaced it in order to remove identifying marks be-

cause to have done so once the "legal juggernaut" had started could have led to criminal charges.

Mr Preston said that he had no means of knowing if the identification marks on the secret document would help reveal the "mole".

"That has been one of the nightmare factors of this case. The leaker took extreme precautions to make sure we had no idea who he or she was. He or she had every opportunity in handing us the document to

make certain it would be of no relevance if handed back. But we did not know that for certain."

The National Union of Journalists last night condemned the court ruling as "yet another serious attack on press freedom and the right of the public to be told what is being done in its name."

Mr Eddie Barrett, NUJ president, said that if journalists were compelled to disclose their sources they would quickly dry

up and the public would be denied information.

The Director of Public Prosecutions said last night there would be no criminal proceedings in connection with another government report leaked to *The Guardian*. A Department of Education and Science report was returned unopened by the newspaper because it was sent in a unstamped envelope.

Leading article, page 9
Law report, page 28

Letter from New York

Down and out in the soup-kitchen queue

Mr Edwin Meese, one of President Reagan's senior aides, said this week that some customers at the soup kitchens in American cities were not poor but were there "because the food is free and that's easier than paying for it". Trevor Fitzhugh joined the queues to find out for himself.

Outside the soup kitchen on West 28th Street men, women and children wait silently in a long line and sniff the smell of stew. Jimmy, the doorman, has control and as one person emerges from the 58-seat canteen another is allowed in. In the three-hour lunch period this place serves more than 400 meals.

No one is asked if he has any money, who he is or what he does. Those who run the Holy Apostles Church soup kitchen keep an open door. They say that the sort of people who come here have had enough of being humiliated. The guests, as they are called, get a free meal, a smile and no questions.

Most of them look in need of a square meal and some human warmth. All that is asked is that they eat up the food and make room for another hungry person. They attend to their trays and eat mostly in a monastic silence.

Rosie, who is middle-aged and a regular here, has a meal of minced meat, beans, bread, salad and fruit. "It's my only meal of the day. I depend on it."

Abigail, a country-and-western singer whose luck ran out and who now lives in a hostel for the homeless, sits with her five children, aged two to nine. "We need to come here. There are no cooking facilities at the hostel and we couldn't afford to eat out."

A young man says: "I don't have a job or a home, I have to eat."

Many of the people who come here live and sleep rough, in stations and up against the walls. Some spend hours in the trains for warmth. Others live in depressing, run-down hotels used by the city council for homeless families. There are more than 35,000 homeless people in this city, two million homeless across the country: the broken Americans.

Some of those in the canteens and in the queue outside are drifters and alcoholics, long-gone and grey-faced.

"But they are not all the traditional Bowery bums," says the Rev William Greenwald, who runs the kitchen. "A surprisingly high number are white as well as black, who have just drifted out of the economic mainstream."

New York has 80 soup kitchens, run by churches and volunteers, twice as many as there were a year ago. There are similar canteens throughout the US.

Poverty and spectacle of hungry Americans constitute a sensitive political issue which haunts President Reagan. There are more than 34 million people, 15 per cent of the population, below the poverty line. A family of four is officially poor if it gets under \$9,862 (\$6,800) a year.

President Reagan is widely viewed as being unsympathetic towards the poor and hungry. Mr Meese's remarks about the people who go to soup kitchens are a notorious remark of Mr Reagan's, that food stamp recipients bought vodka with their spare money.

The Administration is trying to repair the damage. Its record on welfare is not good. The Administration has cut billions of dollars from food programmes, removed hundreds of thousands of people from the food stamp scheme and forced hundreds of schools to stop providing lunch. The soup kitchens have spread as the crisis has bitten.

This week it was reported that the Administration had delayed funding for a scheme to distribute surplus food to the poor.

Those helping to feed the very poor complain bitterly about the red tape that makes it difficult for them to obtain surplus food from the Government.

At the Holy Apostles kitchen, Mr Greenwald said: "There is now an adversarial relationship between government welfare people and those they are meant to serve... The welfare system is a maze, immoral, horrible and shameful for all Americans."

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

New exhibitions
Textile Designs and Drawings by Janet Hunter, Atkinson Gallery, Lord Street, Southampton: Mon to Fri 10 to 5, Thurs and Sat 10 to 1, closed Sun (ends Jan 14).
The Print Collection, showing the creative use of different printing processes by 20th Century artists: Walsall Museum and Art Gallery, Lichfield Street, Walsall: Mon to Fri 10 to 5, closed Sat and Sun (ends Jan 21).

Solution of Puzzle No 16306
SOLUTION OF PUZZLE NO 16311

The Times Crossword Puzzle No 16312
1 prize of The Times Atlas of the World (comprehensive edition) will be given for the first three correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times Crossword Competition, 12 Cole Street, London WC9 9PT. The winners and solution will be published next Saturday.

The winners of last Saturday's competition are:
1. Mr. N. M. Nichols, 6 Thirlestane, Lemsford Road, St. Albans, Herts.; John G. Morgan, 100 West Road, Peterhead, Aberdeenshire.

Name: _____
Address: _____

Tomorrow
Last chance to see
Fibre art by a collection of artists, and felt hangings by Freda Walker, Abbot Hall, Kendal, Cumbria: Sun 2 to 5 (ends today).
All this and more...
Music
Organ recital by George Blackmore, City School, Stradbroke Road, Suffolk, 2.30.
Ron Goodwin Christmas Show, with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Theatre Royal, Plymouth, 7.30.
Concert by BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra, St David's Hall, Cardiff, 7.30.
General
Antique Fair, Golden Valley Hotel, Cheltenham, 10.30 to 4.30.

ACROSS
1 Ministry houses cunning bird (6).
2 Went to work? Made things easier (8).
3 One of the informers against Hamlet (8).
4 Island is quiet, held by old Persian king (6).
5 As one must be to win the girl? (8).
6 Approval of a ruse (6).
7 Check about a break in one's journey (8).
8 Advantage? Hamlet (4).
9 One master back with the flag (4).
10 Battle soldier around - just cheer up (8).
11 Lag - one in a plot about to return (6).
12 Girl with little ones - they spend nothing on clothes (8).
13 Common chords in sound attempt to get publicity (6).
14 Thoroughly infuses in small amounts (8).

DOWN
1 With resolution, ties lady in knots (8).
2 Traveled on the river a long way down (6).
3 Secured conjunction about a job (8).
4 Cross a wild one in a wild set (8).
5 The girl next door, for example - Amanda (9).
6 Point of balance - in the middle of mass? (6,2,7).
7 Hawthorn - beautiful in and around Berkshire Square (7).
8 Fatty to change too (8).
9 Harry's in trouble (8).
10 Garden, set out and divided (9).
11 Birds around - dead copies (8).
12 Given point, it could be a case of possession (8).
13 Hint at getting - eventually - around (8).
14 Lantern - one broken inside (8).
15 Mixed advance in source of growth (7).

In the garden

Leaves of many plants such as *Prunella demissa* and other species, also hellebores (Christmas and Lenten roses) all die down and tend to become a soggy mess. They should be removed not only in the interests of tidiness but also to remove shelter for pests and any danger the rotting material might be to grow buds just below the surface.

Protect the more tender plants such as *nerines*, *crinoids*, *anemones* and *schizostylis* against frost with a 6in layer of straw, peat, or leaves over and around them. The leaves of red hot pokers together wigwag.

Draw soil up to the base of the taller brassicas - kales, Brussels sprouts, sprouting broccoli or even stake the very tall plants. Remove dead and yellowing leaves.

RH

Anniversaries

Births: Domenico Cimarra, composer, Avana, Italy, 1749; Ludwig van Beethoven, baptized Bonn, 1770; Sir Humphry Davy, chemist, inventor of the miner's safety lamp, Penzance 1778; John Greenleaf Whitaker, writer and abolitionist, Haverrill, Massachusetts, 1807; Deaths: Simon Bolivar, Santa Maria, Colombia, 1830; William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin of Largs, scientist, Netherhall, Strathclyde, 1907.

Tomorrow

Joseph Thomson, physicist, Nobel laureate, 1906, Manchester, 1856; Francis Thompson, poet, author of *The Hound of Heaven*, Preston, Lancashire, 1907.

Christmas music

Christmas music for choral, solo and organ, Manchester Cathedral, 7.30.
Concert of Carol, by Lincoln Musical Society, Lincoln Minster, Lincoln, 7.30.
Ron Goodwin Christmas Show, with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Westbury Hall, Poole, 7.30.
Northampton Bach Choir Carol Concert, St Matthew's Church, Kettering Road, Northampton, 7.30.
Bath Abbey Choir and Orchestra present Christmas Music, Bath Abbey, Bath, 7.30.
A Christmas celebration, Union Chapel, Church Road, Combe Down, Bath, 7.30.

The pound

	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	1.66	1.56	
Austria Sch	28.85	27.25	
Canada Cdn	83.75	79.75	
Denmark Kr	14.74	14.04	
Finland Mk	8.69	8.29	
France Fr	12.32	11.82	
Germany DM	4.86	3.87	
Greece Dr	160.00	150.00	
Portugal Esc	194.00	184.00	
Spain Ptas	1.30	1.25	
Italy Lira	2445.00	2335.00	
Japan Yen	349.00	331.00	
Netherlands Gld	4.58	4.35	
Norway Kr	11.52	10.92	
Sweden Kr	11.30	10.70	
Switzerland Fr	2.21	2.08	
USA \$	1.46	1.41	
European DM	216.00	206.00	

The papers

The nine drunk drivers jailed by magistrates in Grays, Essex, must have had the shock of their lives. The Sun says, "Such tough sentences are almost unknown. But we hope that from now on, motorists will take them as the norm. It may seem hard to shove people, who are otherwise decent citizens, behind bars. But if the risk of a few days in jail means saving lives at Christmas, then it is well worth it. We're not being killjoys. There is nothing wrong with the cup that cheers - particularly at this time of the year. But the message that the Essex magistrates are underlining so dramatically is simple: 'If you do drink, don't drive.'"

Roads

Wales and West: A35 Single-lane traffic on temporary traffic signals on Aaminster - Honiton road between Kilmington - Loughwood, Devon. A483: Temporary traffic lights, long delays in Wind Street, Ammanford. A55: Temporary roundabout at Colwyn Bay, junction with A546.
Midlands: Contrailow on A34: Stone - Newcastle road at Stongford, Staffordshire. M5: Today only: Motorway between junction 9 (Tewkesbury) single lane traffic will operate on both north and southbound carriageways for part of day, both carriageways should be clear by mid-afternoon. A1: Lane closure at Colsterworth, Lincolnshire.
North: A6: Sewer cleaning work along southbound carriageway of Stockport Road, Greater Manchester between 08.00 hrs and 15.30 hrs. A637: Bailey bridge in use in Barnsley Road between Darion and Barugh, delays. A19: One way westbound and diversion at Mandale Interchange, Middleburgh (Heslop) Drive to Levick Crescent.

Weather

Pressure will remain low over southern Britain with an associated frontal trough moves north-eastwards over England.

6am to midnight
London, East Angles, E, W Midlands, North Wales: Cloudy, occasional rain. Cying out, sunny intervals developing. Wind SE moderate, locally fresh, becoming variable light; max temp 6 to 8C (43 to 46F).
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SW, NW Scotland, Angles: Mainly dry, rather cloudy, a few sunny intervals developing; wind mainly E moderate, locally fresh; max temp 6 to 8C (43 to 46F).
Outlook for tomorrow and Monday: continuing unsettled with near normal temperatures.

Christmas music

Christmas music for choral, solo and organ, Manchester Cathedral, 7.30.
Concert of Carol, by Lincoln Musical Society, Lincoln Minster, Lincoln, 7.30.
Ron Goodwin Christmas Show, with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, Westbury Hall, Poole, 7.30.
Northampton Bach Choir Carol Concert, St Matthew's Church, Kettering Road, Northampton, 7.30.
Bath Abbey Choir and Orchestra present Christmas Music, Bath Abbey, Bath, 7.30.
A Christmas celebration, Union Chapel, Church Road, Combe Down, Bath, 7.30.

Cheap flights

British Caledonian has introduced two new fares on flights from Gatwick Airport to Edinburgh: Glasgow and Manchester, which it says saves up to 50 per cent. A special "Week end Fare" operates outwards on Fridays or Saturdays, with a return on Sunday. This Manchester and £60 to Edinburgh and Glasgow. The same fares apply for senior citizens on certain flights on weekdays.

The pound

	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	1.66	1.56	
Austria Sch	28.85	27.25	
Canada Cdn	83.75	79.75	
Denmark Kr	14.74	14.04	
Finland Mk	8.69	8.29	
France Fr	12.32	11.82	
Germany DM	4.86	3.87	
Greece Dr	160.00	150.00	
Portugal Esc	194.00	184.00	
Spain Ptas	1.30	1.25	
Italy Lira	2445.00	2335.00	
Japan Yen	349.00	331.00	
Netherlands Gld	4.58	4.35	
Norway Kr	11.52	10.92	
Sweden Kr	11.30	10.70	
Switzerland Fr	2.21	2.08	
USA \$	1.46	1.41	
European DM	216.00	206.00	

The papers

The nine drunk drivers jailed by magistrates in Grays, Essex, must have had the shock of their lives. The Sun says, "Such tough sentences are almost unknown. But we hope that from now on, motorists will take them as the norm. It may seem hard to shove people, who are otherwise decent citizens, behind bars. But if the risk of a few days in jail means saving lives at Christmas, then it is well worth it. We're not being killjoys. There is nothing wrong with the cup that cheers - particularly at this time of the year. But the message that the Essex magistrates are underlining so dramatically is simple: 'If you do drink, don't drive.'"

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